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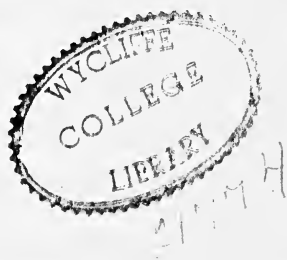
THE LIFE-GIVER AT WORK

By

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INTRODUCTION

This book deals with the work of God the Holy Spirit. It aims to tell us what Christians believe and know about how He works. But also it tries to set out how we may receive His help to deepen our Christian lives and what hinders us receiving it in the fullest possible degree. We must ponder the contents and put them into practice. Thus we might say that there are two main purposes, doctrinal and devotional.

Certain Bible readings, hymns and prayers are suggested for each chapter. Their order and theme is linked to that of the book as far as possible. Each reader should use these as he or she finds most convenient. Probably it would be best to use one or more of the readings, hymns and prayers daily for those who read a portion of this book daily. In the case of those who read a chapter at a time, it would be better not to start the next chapter until the passages have been read as God's word to us, the prayers prayed and the hymns used in a way to deepen our Christian life.

1

THE PERFECT PORTRAIT OF HIS WORK

IN order to know how the Holy Spirit works consider the life and work of Jesus Christ. The operation of the Spirit in the life of Christ was not hindered or blurred by sin. Christ was man as God meant man to be. He was unique in this for even the best of the saints have never been sinless. In their lives we do not get a perfect reflection of the work of the Spirit just as the mirrors of ancient times never gave a perfect reflection of someone looking into them. So man imperfectly reveals the Spirit of God working within him; Christ alone gives a true and perfect picture. In Him alone the Spirit of God was able to work unhindered. While Jesus Christ is our portrait of the Father *He is also our portrait of the Spirit.*

The life of our Lord proves this. We find the connection between our Lord and the Spirit taking

place even before the birth of Christ for the power of the Holy Spirit overshadowed the Virgin Mary. The first chapter of St. Luke's Gospel has numerous references to the work of the Spirit at the time of the Incarnation. It was part of His office to co-operate in the Incarnation. Therefore the human nature assumed by Christ was in a special manner under the Spirit's influence. The remembrance of these truths may help us to realize how close was the connection between the Incarnate Lord and the Holy Spirit and how later it might prove difficult to separate their functions.

In our Lord's life there was a special intervention of the Holy Ghost at His baptism but this striking manifestation cannot be held in any way to imply that our Lord had not previously been filled with the Spirit. The descent of the dove and the voice seem rather to provide a confirmation for our Lord of His mission and a strengthening for its fulfilling as they are so closely linked to the temptations. Also it may be possible that our Lord refrained from entering upon His life work until he had received this commission (St. Luke 2: 21f). Christ was to be the new Adam, the first of a restored human race and so we see in His baptism the Holy Spirit coming to restore mankind through Christ, the Head of a redeemed and renewed

human race. Our Lord's temptations show us a perfect picture of how the Spirit can aid us in meeting temptation. Jesus went to meet temptation 'being full of the Holy Ghost'. He faced His temptations, He overcame them and He returned 'in the power of the Spirit' and He left us an example that we should follow (St. Luke 2: 1-15). *Before, during and after temptation Jesus was using the power of the Spirit.*

In our Lord's temptations it seems legitimate to infer that the insight which He showed into the implications of the suggestions made to Him (no matter how innocent they appeared on the surface) was part of the wisdom which is truly spiritual. To the same source was due the power of endurance when tempted; almost, we might say, a combination of faithfulness, longsuffering and self control. We may also ascribe the conquest of pride, the successful resistance to the desire to use popularity and power for secondary ends to the same Spirit. He was tempted to use power for purely personal gain; He was tempted to use prestige and power to save Himself; He was tempted to do evil that good might come. These tests are the sort each of us have to face. He overcame them and returned Victor in the power of the Spirit. We may learn

from Christ's example how to fight and overcome our temptations.

No matter how we examine passages in the Gospels referring to the Holy Spirit as operative in and through Christ we cannot avoid the conclusion that, directly or indirectly, our Lord thought of the Spirit as the inspirer of His work.

Concerning the crucifixion it has been said that it was through His death and its merits that Christ obtained the assistance of the Holy Spirit for men. His death was the complete offering of a life which had been always obedient to the Spirit. The work of the Third Person, the crucifixion and Pentecost can be linked together. The Spirit's coming at Whitsuntide was, as it were, part of the purchase made and obtained through Christ's death on man's behalf. Perhaps the point may be made plainer by another line of approach.

We speak of the love of God being made plain by the death of Christ, but we only realize this by means of the Spirit. It was only when He descended upon the Apostles that they saw the full significance of the events of our Lord's life and death and proclaimed them. "Calvary was interpreted in the light of Pentecost." Thus the two events depended upon each other. Through the operation of the Spirit the disciples and their con-

verts fully grasped the love of God. Pentecost without Calvary, as far as we can say, would not have happened. Calvary was the scene where Pentecost was won for man and yet Calvary without Pentecost would not possess the richness of meaning which we are able to attach to it. Indeed we may go further and say that the meaning of Calvary was disclosed only when the Spirit came at Pentecost. Christ has done everything to give us salvation, *the Spirit does all in imparting to us salvation.*

Part of what has been said in the preceding few paragraphs applies to the Resurrection. It too would lose much of the richness of its meaning if it had not been followed by Pentecost. We cannot separate into completely watertight compartments the Resurrection and the descent of the Spirit; rather they are more like rooms in the same house which open into each other. The Holy Spirit is the "Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead". The Holy Spirit is the agent of Christ's resurrection and for us this means that if we have received Him we possess an assurance of sharing in Christ's victory over death. We are both partakers of Christ and *we are also partakers of the Holy Spirit.* We might ponder these words carefully.

After the Resurrection Christ initiated the rule of the Spirit. By means of the descent of the Spirit Christ manifested His triumph over sin, death and hell. It was at an early appearance after the Resurrection that our Lord breathed on His disciples and said "Receive ye the Holy Spirit" and so the inspiration of the Spirit's life was communicated to those assembled in the upper room (St. John 20: 22).

Next we turn to our Lord's glorification and ascension. The connection between the Ascension and Pentecost was realized in very early times when St. Peter in his the first Whitsunday sermon stressed the close links between the exaltation, the promise of the Holy Spirit and His outpouring. Jesus "being by the right hand of God exalted, . . . hath shed forth this" (the gift of Pentecost) (Acts 2: 33). St. Peter realized quickly the meaning and importance of our Lord's teaching on the matter.

In some manner, mysterious perhaps to the mind, yet very real, believers experienced the truth of our Lord's words "Lo, I am with you always". The gift bestowed is linked to the Lord's glorification as His gift, for He had promised to send such a gift after His own Ascension. Further, the Spirit of the divine-human Christ proceeds immediately

from the ascended Lord. This personal manifestation of the Holy Spirit waited upon the glorification of the risen and ascended Jesus. When the Ascension had taken place everything preliminary to the full bestowal of the Holy Spirit was complete and so the disciples were told to await His coming. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you") Octs 1:4).

Pentecost itself is the third mighty act of God, the "greatest of all miracles". The Holy Spirit was an incomparable and inestimable gift, the greatest of God's mercies. Without this feast all other feasts of the Christian year are as nothing. It was an "indescribable blessing" the Alpha and Omega of all our solemnities. *Today we fail to realize the tremendous importance of Pentecost.*

We should try to make the importance of Pentecost plain. One way to give Pentecost its rightful place in the life of the Church and of the Christian would be to surround it with those extras which in the case of Easter and Christmas enhance their observance. These may be additions of special music, Services, flowers and others, of appeal to the senses, of indirect suggestion rather than direct instruction. It would be worthwhile to think out other means to stress the importance of Pentecost.

READINGS AND HYMNS

Many of these readings from the Bible and the hymns have material which could be used with more than one chapter. The number of the hymns refer to the Hymn Book of the Anglican Church of Canada.

Certain of the prayers could also be used with different chapters and the Litany added to this introduction could perhaps be used with each chapter or used on Wednesdays and Fridays while the book is being read.

Readings:—St. Luke 1: 26-35; 4: 1-22; St. John 16: 13ff; 20: 19-23; Acts 1: 1-8; 2: 1-4, 16-21, 32-38.

Hymns:—181, 489.

Prayers: A LITANY FOR PENTECOST

O God, who dost sanctify Thy Universal Church in every race and nation: Shed abroad throughout the whole world the gift of the Holy Spirit, that the work wrought by His power at the first preaching of the Gospel may now be shed abroad among all believing hearts; through Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord.

O Creator Spirit; Lord, Giver of Life and Light; Comforter, Sanctifier, and Guide of the souls of men:

Hear us and help us, we beseech Thee.

Spirit of wisdom, infinite, immortal, and unsearchable, proceeding from the Father and the Son, have compassion on our ignorance and lead us by Thy kindly light onward into truth:

Hear us and help us, we beseech Thee.

Spirit of love and perfect service, given beyond measure unto Jesus Christ our Saviour, manifested in His sinless life, His heavenly teaching, and His redeeming death, and glorified in His resurrection, we open our hearts to receive Thy grace:

Hear us and help us, we beseech Thee.

Thou whom the Father is more ready to give than earthly parents are to give good gifts unto their children; Thou whom Christ hath promised to send unto His disciples, come to us, abide in us and sanctify our souls by truth and love:

Hear us and help us, we beseech Thee.

By the inspiration Thou has given to Thy holy prophets in all ages; by the guidance Thou hast granted to those in doubt and trouble; by the courage Thou hast restored to the fearful and the strength Thou hast imparted to the weak; by the comfort Thou hast bestowed upon the sorrowful and the hope Thou hast kindled in sad hearts, have mercy on us and supply all our needs:

Hear us and help us, we beseech Thee.

From pride and vainglory; from self-will and obstinacy; from shallow thoughts and hasty judgments; from impure desires and unkind purposes; from envy, malice, and all uncharitableness; from every wicked way and evil wish, deliver and save us by Thine indwelling grace:

Hear us and help us, O Holy Spirit.

In the growth of wisdom and the increase of love; in loyalty to the truth as Thou givest us to see it, and in deepening good will toward our fellow men; in honesty and honour; in cheerful labour and true gladness of heart, make Thy presence felt within us, and enable us to grow unto the likeness of Christ our Lord:

Hear us and help us, O Holy Spirit.

2

SOME WINDOWS UPON HIS WORK

OFTEN if we wish to explain something or help someone to get a better grasp of some idea, we say to them "It's like this" or "I'll tell you a story to help you understand." In certain cases we may draw a diagram. We shall use a few of the biblical images, similes and metaphors which help to make matters connected with the work of the Holy Spirit plainer. We must not, however, forget that every detail of the likeness employed can seldom be made to correspond with the truth which we are trying to grasp.

We shall join the elements air, breath and wind together and then deal with fire and water separately. This course is fairly easy to take as the Hebrew word used in the Old Testament has the same two primary meanings 'wind' and 'breath'.

Breath and air are an indispensable necessity in

order to live. Similarly, the Spirit is not an extra gadget, not even like a function in the life of the Christian. He is not even like blood which performs a special function in the circulation of the body, He is the air the Christian breathes, the native air of his homeland. Just as air and wind surround the body and enable it to breathe and thereby live, just as one cannot make a long journey without air, no more can we make the journey of spiritual life without the Spirit. Hence we should sing "Breathe on me Breath of God" as a prayer. Air surrounds us, we continually breathe it, death results if it be withdrawn. So it is with the work of the Holy Spirit: *We die spiritually without the Spirit.*

Air is also inexhaustible except when some method is deliberately designed to shut it off and shut it out. In the same way the powers and gifts of the Spirit are like a limitless banking account which can never be overdrawn by a customer. Air is also free. We do not buy it nor can we purchase it. These three characteristics of indispensability, inexhaustibility and freedom apply to the Spirit. But not only is the Spirit free in the sense that the gift of God cannot be obtained for money. He is free and independent in that He is not subordinate to nor controlled by man. "The wind bloweth

where it listeth” and likewise the Spirit distributes, divides and gives as He wills(St. John 3:8 and 1 Cor. 12: 11). *The Spirit is free; His resources are never exhausted.*

The different types of wind and their workings are suggestive of the various methods of the Spirit’s operations. Sometimes it is sudden and vehement, quick and active, mighty in operation. There are occasions when the wind rises suddenly with gale force. The Spirit may act thus either in the life of the unconverted or in that of the converted man. On the other hand He may act gradually and gently, like a gentle voice “soft as the breath of even”.

In both cases, however, there is a very important common feature. The evidence of His working is seen in its results. We hear the wind; we see its effect or feel it on our bodies. So in our lives we become aware that the Spirit is at work and others also become aware because of the changes for the better which they can observe.

The wind blowing aids purity, health and vigour. A man in normal health walking when the wind blows feels the pureness of the air, and has a sense of healthy well being and vigorous activity. The fact of air, breath and wind aiding health is closely allied to the root idea of the word

'salvation' which means health and it is the Spirit's gift to man. Moral purity, health and vigour are apparent only when and where He operates.

We may now deal with the metaphor of *fire which is so powerful, can purify and give heat*. Over and over, even outside the Bible, fire has been regarded as a sign of something greater than human, for example, when Moses saw the bush burning he was reminded of the presence of God (Exodus 3).

There is also the sense of tremendous power unleashed. In our modern world a vivid example of this is a forest fire. This element of power is seen in the Spirit's ability to overcome evil, and in the splendour of the illumination which He gives, for a subordinate feature of fire is the light it gives as many a poor scholar in a humble home in former times has found by experience, working by the light of a fire. We should also note the remarkable effectiveness of fire in achieving a result, whether purposely or not.

The power to overcome evil typifies an idea linked with fire. For many years fire has been used to purify and refine precious metals and so it fitly represents the Spirit's function in cleansing and purifying both the Christian and the Church. The Spirit purges our hearts like sacrificial flame.

There are certain things which fire alone can cleanse. The Holy Spirit alone is able to cleanse and deliver the sinner fully.

Fire also can melt and soften what is otherwise unworkable. An ordinary blacksmith's forge is a simple example. Here we see a straight piece of iron which is hard, strong and resistant until it is heated, then it is easily beaten out and hammered into shape, narrowed and pierced with holes, to make a horse shoe. More modern is the action of an oxyacetylene jet where the centre of the point of flame is thousands of degrees of heat, (so I am told) and here in a few seconds the flame, by its own power, can make a hole in a sheet of metal. *The Spirit can melt and break down the stony heart, the hard heart.*

Again fire sets afire; it gives warmth and enthusiasm. How we are warmed by a camp-fire and how eagerly and fully we join in a sing song around the camp-fire! So it happens in the case of someone influenced, perhaps goaded by the Spirit, to pursue a certain object. There is an infectious enthusiasm, a never dying flame of zestfulness about him. He is burning yet alive, like the bush seen by Moses which was burning yet was not consumed (Exodus 3: 2). Such a man is alive to the full; ardent in his endeavours. Zeal and fervency

predominate, coldness, fear and weakness are controlled, eliminated or destroyed. Just as heat is of tremendous significance, so is the new heart implanted by the Holy Spirit, the heart which is inclined to holiness. Holiness is both negative, that is avoiding the wrong, the positive, which is doing the right, and like a well charged battery it is capable of emitting power. We can glow with the divine fire.

When we are aided, baptized and controlled by the Spirit we are changed, as iron is changed in a furnace or fire, not in essence but in quality; we are made like finely tempered steel, resistant yet sharp, able to serve and made suitable for definite purposes and fit to do our task effectively. With this reference to the effectiveness of fire as a feature which applies equally to the operation of the Spirit, we may end our effort to trace the significance of this metaphor, but we should examine our lives to see how far effects, like those mentioned, are taking place.

The figure of *water has perhaps an even wider range of meaning*. We have already pointed out that the idea of filling applies to wind (and much the same might be said of water). We will not delay over this but point out that another feature common to both is their ability to penetrate. The

fact reminds us that the Spirit seeks to penetrate our life. If we let Him He penetrates all our nature. To ensure proper growth an abundant supply of water is needed. Abundance may be taken in two ways, water may be poured out and also poured in or upon something. So Christians are like ground, thirsty ground, upon which such abundance of the Spirit's resources can be poured out that they are filled, filled to abundance; like vessels they become filled. They are filled with something else, with gifts donated by Someone other than themselves. *The Spirit is able to penetrate all through our life and fill it completely.*

Water then is suggestive of abundance, capable of filtering that which needs it or is suitable to receive it, filling even that which is not perhaps always suitable but ready to receive. Our Lord linked the idea of abundance with that of the life which He could confer (St. John 10: 10). Dew and rain also, both linked with the conception of water, have the same idea (Psalms 65: 9).

In the case of all three, another feature is that they are life giving. The river of God is full of water, here we have the idea of life and abundance linked. The symbolism, familiar to the dweller in Palestine, is that of a river which does not dry up in times of drought. The same may be said of

the resources of the man who is filled with the Spirit. Such a man shall be like a tree planted by the river, a tree whose leaf does not wither, unafraid when heat comes, not dying in the time of drought; continually yielding fruit, the proof of inward life (Jeremiah 17: 8). Why is this so? *Because the Spirit confers abundant life.*

Again this function of the Spirit may be likened to the effects of irrigation on land short of moisture. It gives life and develops what is alive causing it to grow. Our hearts have therefore been compared to gardens where the Spirit penetrates the dry and thirsty ground. The soil is made fertile. His fertilizing power can make fruitful lives which without Him are barren.

The soil is also prevented from flying all over the area thus impoverishing the land, making it useless and creating our modern dust bowls. The earth is kept in its place; it is also kept together.

The action of water on the earth can be used to illustrate two features of the Spirit's work, first, that it is He who enables Christians to bring forth the fruit of good living and, secondly, that He joins them together into one united fellowship. So the Spirit makes believers fruitful in good works and unites them into one body.

Water purifies; this is vividly brought before us

in baptism in which we are not only washed but purified. This was made obvious in the ceremony since in olden times candidates for baptism went down into the water facing the west which represented the region of darkness, evil and sin; they came up from the water facing east, the land of light, goodness and purity. They had been washed, purified and cleansed.

Still one other point may be made without forcing the metaphor. Water can take varying forms according to the type of vessel which contains it. It can adapt itself to any shape or form. Likewise the Spirit adapts Himself to our varied natures; at times He acts like a storm, at times as a gentle breeze; sometimes He drenches our life like a torrent of rain, sometimes He is there like dew, nourishing us when rain is absent for long periods. The Spirit uses various occasions and means; *He adapts Himself to meet different needs.*

Space does not allow us to expand the content of other metaphors used about the Spirit but if we bear in mind the mental pictures we have read of wind, water and fire they will illustrate and provide examples of large amounts of the materials in our succeeding chapters.

Readings:—1 Kings 19: 11ff.; Ezekiel 37: 1-14;

St. John 3: 1-8; Acts 2: 1-4; Ephesians 4: 3-14.

Hymns:—180, 497, 484, 486. (These should be read slowly and prayerfully.)

Prayers:

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, and giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the Prophets (Nicene Creed).

O God the Holy Ghost,
Come to us, and among us!
Come as the Wind, and cleanse us;
Come as the Fire, and burn;
Come as the Dew, and refresh:
Convict, convert, and consecrate
Many hearts and lives to our great good and
to thy greater glory.
And this we ask for Jesus Christ's sake.
(*From "Per Christum Vincas"*).

The Spirit of power

O God who in the burning fire of thy love wast pleased to pour out the Holy Spirit on thy disciples: Grant us by the same Spirit to be new lit

with heavenly desires and with the power to fulfil them; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (A Gelasian and Gregorian Prayer.)

O Holy Spirit of God,

who with thy holy breath dost cleanse the
 hearts and minds of men,

comforting them when they be in sorrow,
leading them when they be out of the way,
kindling them when they be cold,

knitting them together when they be at vari-
 ance and enriching them with manifold
 gifts; by whose working all things live:

We beseech thee to maintain and daily in-
 crease the gifts which thou hast vouch-
 safed to us,

that with thy light before us and within us, we
 may pass through this world

without stumbling and without straying;
who livest and reignest with the Father and
 the Son, everlastingly. Amen.

(Christian Prayers, 1578, (from Erasmus).

3

SPECIAL AGENCIES OF HIS WORK

THERE are many means by which the Holy Spirit helps us. In our present chapter we shall deal with those special channels used by the Spirit; these are often called 'means of grace'. By the words 'means of grace' we refer to the Bible, prayer, worship and the two sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. Their chief purpose and main object is spiritual and religious and they do not function apart from the working of the Spirit because their main intent is to be channels which He can use.

First we shall consider the function of the Holy Spirit concerning the Scriptures, their writing and meaning. The Spirit speaks to us in the Scriptures and He is a witness to their truth. Some may respond more fully than others but it is the one Spirit who teaches and He teaches that which had

been revealed in Christ. In the Scriptures the Spirit declares afresh their meaning for the Church or for the individual Christian.

Concerning the Bible as a whole, the Church has not made any claim to lay down any one special method whereby the Holy Spirit worked in and through Scripture. His influences accompany the written word and often become the pledge and earnest of further graces. While the Bible itself is the channel for the divine grace, the reading of it is made effective by the aid of the Holy Spirit. The importance of the Spirit's action by means of the written word is so great that people who claim to act by the Spirit but contradict the written word thereby really put themselves outside the Church. The Spirit bears His witness to the authority of Old and New Testaments that they contain all things necessary to salvation (Article 6 of the Thirty-nine Articles). He unfolds their meaning and so He may be called 'the porter of the Scriptures' and they who are without the Spirit cannot understand the Scriptures. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God — because they are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2: 14). These statements apply especially to the New Testament. Here the authors, by the

aid of the Spirit, were preparing a treasure house of truth and doctrine.

How then can we speak of the Holy Spirit as author, conservator or interpreter? We can do so if we remember that He always operates by means of lower degrees, in this case men's minds, hearts and hands, and that man always retains his freedom. We can speak of Him as author at least in the way that we sing "And every virtue we possess . . . are His alone." He is the inspirer. Since belief in the Spirit's inspiration naturally leads to the belief that the Spirit helped to conserve the Scriptures and to interpret them we turn to this topic.

Teaching and interpretation are closely linked. The Spirit enables us to understand what we read; *the Spirit teaches, He interprets, He illuminates*. He will show the things of Christ to us, He teaches the simple and sincere things hidden from the wise and prudent and enables them to discern and to approve things that are excellent by increased powers of discrimination (Philippians 1: 10). The scope, of course, of the Spirit's teaching is determined by its object which is to glorify Christ (St. John 16: 14). He strengthens both our powers of memory and of judgment. John Donne, the poet and preacher of the early seventeenth century, stresses the work of the Holy Spirit upon the mem-

ory in a remarkable phase: "truly the memory is oftener the Holy Spirit's pulpit that he preaches in, than the understanding." He almost repeats the words of Jesus that the Spirit would bring all things to our remembrance (St. John 14: 20).

One of the chief methods by which we are taught about the word of God and its meaning explained to us and its guidance applied to our daily life is through preaching which is often called the "ministry of the word". This is so central that it is an important part of every ordination to the ministry. When a person is made a deacon, ordained a priest or consecrated a bishop he is given a New Testament or Bible as a sign that he is both to study the Scriptures himself and also to preach their truths so that the Holy Spirit may work in people's hearts and minds. *Preaching therefore is a method used by the Spirit.*

In true preaching the Spirit acts using the living voice and person as a medium. When men humbly use their gifts of speech and personality to preach and listeners use their powers to hear and receive, sermons become chariots of God to convey the word of life. Preaching, however, is only recognized as the Word of God through the operation of the Spirit. Preaching is very important because it is a means God uses to make redemption real

and relevant to each generation. Such preaching is the proclamation to the hearer of heavenly truth in such a way that he is forced to accept or reject. Sermons can be as keys to the kingdom of heaven, as wings to the soul, as spurs to the good affections of men (so said the great Anglican writer Richard Hooker in his *Eccles. Polity* V XXII). The Spirit of God through a human voice confronts the auditor and effects His work through the sermon. The disciples testified to their belief that they preached in the power of the Spirit and that it was He who rendered the hearers capable of receiving their words.

To preach effectively the preacher needs the aid of the Spirit, and it is only when the word of God is received by the help of the Spirit that it is heard aright. It is only possible for the listener to produce fruit by the Spirit's help. It is only through the operation of the Spirit that we receive the Scriptures as the power of God for our salvation.

Let us now consider the Holy Spirit's work concerning our prayers. It may be convenient to follow, develop and supplement the treatment given in a book written three centuries ago. The author was a Congregationalist called John Owen and he maintains that the Spirit's actions concerning prayer are more frequently and expressly asserted

in Scriptures than His operations with respect to any other grace or duty. The gift to pray and the ability so to do are conferred by the Spirit and He furnishes us with a grasp of the things about which we should pray; without Him we could not pray for anything as we ought to do. *The Spirit enlightens, enlivens and enlarges our prayers.*

Of ourselves we cannot pray as we should because we do not know our own needs, nor the richness of God's promises, nor the purpose for which to use the objects of our prayers. The Spirit gives us understanding of these needs and of the supplies of grace available and He alone guides and directs believers to pray or ask for anything to be used for right and proper ends. The Spirit makes intercession for us, an intercession which is carried on within our hearts. Its essential nature is to help our infirmity. Part of His office here is to give us confidence in prayer for we know not how to pray as we ought. In Him we have access to the Father and He enables us to "come boldly to the throne of grace".

Concerning prayer to Him, we find a more clear division of thought. First we note that relatively few prayers are addressed to Him though this number might be increased if we think of certain devotional hymns. For this reason readers are

urged to use prayers given in this book and to look up and use those mentioned in the Prayer Book and the hymns suggested for meditation. Another point, perhaps also insufficiently developed by many of the great churches, is the operation of the Spirit through silent prayer. Many can testify to the vivid awareness of His presence during a time for silent prayer whether corporate or individual.

Other Christians are conscious of the Spirit's action especially in the Sacraments. There is general agreement on the reality and effectiveness of the sacraments as a medium for the operation of the Holy Spirit. Grace is offered and received by these special outward means of baptism and the eucharist which is the name many people give to Holy Communion. "These two are the instruments, or rather the hands by which the Holy Ghost doth offer, exhibit, seal and deliver the grace of God." The Christian world has always believed that the Spirit of God effectually operates in both sacraments, in fact it has been stated that their effectiveness is due to the operation of the Spirit. They are like nerves and arteries joining the body and conveying the vital influence of the Spirit. *The Spirit uses the sacraments to impart His help.*

The manner and way in which the Spirit acts

by means of the Sacraments may well be beyond our consciousness and our comprehension so that quite possibly we shall not be able to answer fully how the Holy Spirit is given in the sacraments but the reality of the gift is primary to all else. We may recall the lines ascribed to Queen Elizabeth I.

“His was the word that spake it.

He took the bread and brake it
And what that word did make it
That I believe and take it.”

If we remember these thoughts they should enable us to avoid three pitfalls. We are not to think of these sacraments as isolated, nor are they exclusive, nor must we overstress the difference between the two. These dangers are avoided by remembering that all doctrine of sacraments follows after and is dependent upon the doctrine of the Spirit.

The Spirit is the agent in baptism. There is general agreement that a gift is given in baptism and that baptism implies a conveyance of the Spirit since we enter into a relationship with Him.

This is the reason why its necessity may be asserted, as in the Catechism of the Anglican Church which calls baptism one of the two sacraments ordained by Christ as “generally necessary to salvation”. Linked to this idea and supple-



menting it is the rich and varied meaning, both individual and corporate, associated with baptism. Here is one reason why the Church wishes baptisms to take place at a public Service.

In baptism infants are translated from a state of nature to a state of grace; we become spiritual creatures. The full realization of this fact is greatly obscured in many places, partly because people are so often allowed to treat baptism as a social convention, partly because the Church has allowed the doctrine of the Spirit to be thrown into the background and partly because of the degrading private manner in which baptism has often been administered. While some of these causes are being remedied there is a good deal of lost ground to be recovered before advance can take place. In baptism, and here lies its great importance, the great gift, the spark, the true germ of the life of the Spirit is effectually imparted.

With more particular reference to the individual, *baptism signifies cleansing by the Spirit as well as a new status conferred*. Both are the work of the one Spirit and baptism is the general medium of both. It also implies a league or covenant between the individual and God, wherein remission of sins is imparted and grace promised for the future. This is sometimes expressed by

using the metaphor of sonship or adoption to sonship. "Now," says the writer of John, "are we sons of God" because we have received the Spirit of adoption (John 3: 1f and Romans 8: 13).

Something must be said about the *Holy Spirit and confirmation*. The whole relationship of baptism and confirmation and the place of the Holy Spirit in relation to each is a matter of much debate in Anglican circles at present. In this book it would not be suitable to advance one view point or try to decry another and so we confine our remarks to the area of agreement. Perhaps later the theologians at work upon the subject may lessen the range of disagreement and be able to give a more united opinion but at present this is not possible.

The normal teaching of the Anglican Church is that those baptized are to be confirmed when they reach years of discretion and "the Order for Confirmation" contains a number of references to the work of the Spirit. The purpose of this Service is that those confirmed "may be strengthened by the Holy Ghost" and so prayer is made for the increase of His manifold gifts of grace and His continual presence with them. While all Anglicans would agree that there would be a deeper apprehension of the Spirit at Confirmation, very many would

also speak of a gift of strength received in confirmation and some would hold that He is given at confirmation for the first time.

In baptism we are adopted to be children of God; in the eucharist food is given to enable us to grow and live as Christians. The presence of the Spirit, His action, His grace is one of the leading realities in both; some might say it is the leading and chief reality in both. Long ago Hooker, the greatest of the early Anglican writers after the Reformation, brought the two closely together. "The grace," he said, "which we have by the Holy Eucharist doth not begin but continue life." Hence in the eucharist the Spirit continues His gracious operations; Christ gives the Holy Ghost to the communicants to sanctify them, "to consummate or make perfect" their life in Christ (Eccles. Polity V LXVII).

It has been said that baptism represents the "once for all" aspect of the Spirit's work while in the eucharist the Holy Spirit "does again upon us" the redeeming work of the death and resurrection of Christ. Baptism alone might engender a sense of false security. The eucharist alone might be perverted into the idea of a spiritual "shot in the arm" necessary to the sinner but the effects of which would completely and quickly disappear.

Hence we may speak of both sacraments linking and contrasting them as equally necessary events in the redemption of the believer.

Another way in which the two sacraments have been linked and yet contrasted was that baptism has been termed the "sacrament of diffusion" and the other that of "unity". The earlier makes an individual, a separate distinct person, part of a body which he was not before, but in the other, in one of its main aspects, the Holy Spirit links us together in "one holy fellowship".

The whole idea of the Spirit's operation must be related to the indwelling of Christ in the believer and in the Church. The total action, both of baptism and the eucharist, takes place in the fellowship of the Spirit. The eucharistic presence and the indwelling of Christ through the Holy Spirit must be linked. He who is present in the sacrament is, as the Revised Version says, "the Spirit of Jesus" (Acts 16: 7).

The Holy Spirit adopts us into the body of Christ in baptism; He enables us to grow and fulfil a function in the body by means of the eucharist. Where the Church is, there is the Spirit, where Christ is, there is the Church. Can we say that in the sacraments, to the recipient,

Christ gives the Spirit? The biblical evidence would answer, Yes.

We would do well to heed the following words, "Neglect not those means which the Spirit hath appointed you to use for the receiving of its help, and which He useth in all his holy operations — Though your ploughing and sowing will not give you a plentiful harvest without the sun, and rain, and the blessing of God, yet these will not do it either unless you plough and sow." Prayer is heard through the Holy Spirit, and the eucharist through the Holy Spirit is accepted and sanctified, and the Scriptures are the words of the Holy Spirit, and are holy. "For if the Holy Spirit is in thee, why dost thou keep thyself from approaching the works of the Holy Spirit." (R. Baxter—Works, Vol. II, p. 197.)

Readings:—Romans 8: 1-14; Ephesians 6: 10-16;
Philippians 4: 8-9.

Hymns:—248, 258, 260.

Prayers:

We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this Infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own Child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy Church. And humbly we beseech thee to grant that he being dead unto sin,

and living unto righteousness, and being buried with Christ in his death, may crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin; and that, as he is made partaker of the death of thy Son, he may also be partaker of his resurrection; so that finally, with all thy holy Church, he may be an inheritor of thine everlasting kingdom; through Christ our Lord. (*Book of Common Prayer, page 307.*)

Almighty and everliving God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by Water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins: Strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength; the spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of thy holy fear, now and for ever. (*Book of Common Prayer, page 334.*)

Defend, O Lord, this thy Child (or this thy Servant) with thy heavenly grace, that he may continue thine for ever; and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit, more and more, until he come unto thy everlasting kingdom. (*Book of Common Prayer, page 335.*)

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. (*Book of Common Prayer, page 266.*)

4

IMPERFECT MEANS FOR HIS WORK

THERE are many additional means through which the Holy Spirit works. But first there is one point which will arise and might cause confusion unless it was explained to us. This is that we can describe certain factors sometimes as means in and through which the Spirit works while at other times they are hindrances to His operation. How can this be?

A simple illustration may help. Charles, our little boy, aged five, has carried up some of the groceries his mother has brought home; he has helped. He also sometimes sits on a chair while his mother is baking. Does he usually help? Any parent will tell you that he is much more likely to hinder. They would be correct! Charles scatters the raisins and puts flour all over the kitchen. In a similar fashion we shall see that a certain factor

at one time may assist and at other times the same factor may hinder the work of the Spirit and be an obstacle to Him.

We should also remember that the Spirit may use the most unexpected means to operate, and we should not be surprised if He does this in our own lives. We must be careful not to refuse or neglect to listen because of the strange way in which the Spirit has acted.

We have spoken already of the Spirit acting through agents or agencies. He may usually act in this way but not always, sometimes He acts directly where to act directly means that His help or guidance comes to us directly, perhaps like a voice. A good example of direct action is found in Acts, chapter eight. When Philip was having great success with his work in Samaria; he was told by God to leave his successful mission and to go along a way through the desert. Here was a direct command — and a surprising one — from the Spirit. The importance of obedience — no matter how strange the order — can be seen from what happened for Philip baptized a very important official and thus Christianity obtained a footing in another land, part of the African continent.

But the Spirit generally acts indirectly and when He deals with man (even if not exclusively)

through Scriptures, sacraments, ministers, Church Services or less specifically religious agencies, we see Him using imperfect media. It is not enough to say that He acts through created things; this is true and these things are far removed from Him in glory and power.

But we must add that these forms are also marred and seared with sin, to a greater or less degree. In our difficulty St. Paul comforts us with his statement that we have the treasure of God's grace in earthen vessels; a vivid, continual and a valuable reminder that the excellency of the power is of God, not in ourselves (II Corinthians 4: 7). The Holy Spirit uses us or certain things just as we or they are. He cannot make us perfectly clean before He uses us as a doctor sterilizes his instruments before using them for an operation.

Even if the Holy Spirit operates without any third party or thing upon a human life, He operates in a creature and through a mind, a will, a spirit, a reason which is finite, human, and, to some degree, sinful and in this way His work may meet with checks and obstacles.

We shall therefore expect Him to use means, we shall expect many means, we shall expect many imperfect means. The Spirit will normally act

through means, not to be despised because a lower degree of reality than He is, and not ruling out the possibility of His direct intervention. Perhaps we might add that sometimes the Spirit will try to emphasize His teaching and make His operation more vital by using two means, eg., the acted parable of the Old Testament prophet where the prophet spoke words and dressed or behaved in some special striking manner. (Compare Isaiah 20.)

Let us turn to consider these *means which He uses, thinking of the arts, events and man's human powers*. These means are many and varied. First, let us glance at certain which may serve as examples: music, drama, culture, events, then go to the reason and conscience. Sound may be mentioned first of all because it may be taken in its rudimentary form to represent a less advanced mode of expression of things like music.

On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit used the agencies of hearing and sight. There was a sound as of wind which is closely linked to divine activity; it was mighty and rushing and was followed by the manifestation to sight, sight in itself being thought of as another symbol of the divine presence. We may legitimately extend this medium beyond a special occasion to music and

art. It has been said truly that one important influence of the Holy Spirit in the last three centuries has been the use of sacred music. A great Christian composer is almost another evangelist. Music may be called the Christian art in a pre-eminent degree. It has often arisen out of Christian worship, under Christian inspiration. It has been developed by Christian musicians for Christian use. So we may think of music, especially the sacred music of great composers, as one way in which the Spirit seeks to help us, to purify, or to comfort, or to reassure, or to inspire.

Let us refer briefly to some other agencies. It is obvious in the middle ages how drama, art and architecture acted as mediums for the Spirit to express Himself. One great example is the number of cathedrals. Buildings, pictures, images, mystery plays were the eye gates of the Spirit.

Let us turn from these somewhat specialized aspects of human life to think about the significance of events as a medium of the Spirit's operation. The poet Tennyson spoke of Ulysses saying,

"All experience is an arch wherethro'

Gleams that untravelled world."

These words might be taken in the sense that the Spirit uses experiences for His own purposes; purposes sometimes of which we are not aware, yet of

value if only we will be pliable in His hands. God can and has used human experiences, pain, suffering and many things which we usually regard as evil, as a medium for grace. He can work through events but they may be like a mine where there lies treasure buried and mingled with other substances and often hard to find, yet capable of being extracted. The Spirit can give new and spiritual meaning to the warp and woof of human life so that men, by careful search, may observe the soul of goodness, even in things evil.

The thoughts of these paragraphs are mentioned not so much as dogmatic final statements but as attempts to show the range and the number of the means which the Spirit may use.

Two of the more frequently used agencies are our reasoning powers and our conscience. The Holy Spirit expects us to use our minds and brains fully and all the other gifts which God has granted us. Richard Baxter, a seventeenth century writer, points out that the Spirit does not work on a man as on a beast or stone, or on a clock. We should note his words, "The Spirit of God supposeth nature and worketh on man as man, by exciting your own understanding and will to do their parts." If it is necessary, he says elsewhere, to use reason as well as other aids, if we expect the

Spirit's help "As reason sufficeth not without the Spirit being dark and asleep,—so the Spirit worketh not on the will but by the reason. Reason and conscience would not move us as they do if the Spirit had not moved them first so that the operation of reason is really the effect of the Spirit who works in us and on us."

Much of this applies to conscience, the inner voice making us aware of right and wrong; both it and reason are closely joined. Our conscience bears its witness with the Spirit. It is because of His working that conscience can bear its testimony for the Spirit instructs the conscience of a man. Therefore to resist our conscience is equivalent to resisting the Holy Ghost and resistance may make us unfit to be the dwelling place of the Spirit.

Conscience, says Joseph Butler, one of the greatest writers on this point, "shows us what course of life we were made for" and its authority is sacred, providing a note of right within and its approval of a certain course of action is binding upon us. It is the "guide assigned us by the author of our nature".

But these references to conscience show that its strength is insufficient to meet man's need of pardon for the past and help for the present and future. It gets dulled by habit and convention

and even when it points us to our duty we do not recognize it as a law which we must obey. *Conscience is often a medium of the Spirit but it is insufficient of itself.*

Two reflections may close our chapter. The first is that because we do not frequently think of the arts, of events and circumstances and of reason and conscience as being mediums for the work of the Spirit we must be the more ready to learn from them, the more anxious to discover how the Spirit may be using them to speak to us. Music, some drama, especially religious drama, and a certain amount of all that we call artistic work are indirect methods and because they are indirect we are more likely to miss their message.

To understand the second reflection we need to recall the story of the little boy, Charles, and his mother's baking. He meant to help but also sometimes he hindered. So we might say that these things which we have mentioned were meant to be helps to men. But man can change and twist them so that they can actually hinder our spiritual life.

Men may not use their artistic gifts to glorify God or give messages and aid to others. They may not realize or admit that God has given them these special powers but may take the glory to themselves and use them for selfish, base and wrong

purposes. In such a way they can definitely hinder the Spirit's work. So with events and temptation; they may tempt us to fall into sin and if we do not resist such a temptation that which could strengthen us weakens us. Events, especially sorrows and disasters, may cause us to deny God, to blame Him, to rebel against Him; we harden ourselves against His Spirit. Events benefitting us may make us forget God and think we can get on nicely without Him and say to Him, "Thank you for your offer but I don't need any help just now. I can manage beautifully on my own."

Reason and conscience can also be twisted, dulled and quenched and so they cease to be of much value. On the other hand, we may not realize that they too need cleansing and training. Reason is not always a sufficient guide, conscience does not always make itself heard and needs to be educated. So we may say that man's powers and the events of our lives may be either instruments with the Spirit and use these in His service and as He wishes.

Readings:—Exodus 3: 1-6; Romans 2: 14-15;
Philippians 4: 11-13.

Hymns:—424, 642.

Prayers:

Comfort, we beseech thee, most gracious God, thy servants who are cast down and faint of heart amidst the sickness and sorrow of the world; and grant that by the power of thy Holy Spirit they may be enabled to go upon their way rejoicing; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

LORD, we beseech thee, grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (*Book of Common Prayer, page 210.*)

O LORD, we beseech thee mercifully to receive the prayers of thy people which call upon thee; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (*Book of Common Prayer, page 90.*)

5

CONSTANT HINDRANCES TO HIS WORK

THERE is a struggle, indeed a war, between the Holy Spirit and the world. We use the word "world" with a distinct meaning, that of an ordered whole separated from God. Humanity which cuts itself off from its Maker becomes unresponsive, even if not actually hostile, to the operation of the Holy Spirit. But He is active in it to convince it where it has gone astray. He will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment to come (St. John 16: 8ff). Despite this, hostility remains. "The world, that is to say fleshly men and children of the world, receive not the Spirit: for they despise the word Christ and laugh it to scorn." They who live by the Spirit live at warfare with the world. They are engaged in warfare in a threefold way. The warfare is permanent, not temporary: it is waged

against those outside the Church and also must be waged against the spirit of the world which remains in the heart of Church members, the "infection of nature" remains in the believer. As Article Nine of the Thirty-nine Articles states.

We shall devote no more attention to this specific topic. But other manifestations of worldiness are more insidious and dangerous because they are less obvious and easily become part of the life of the Christian and of the Church. Hence their danger is greater and they merit more detailed treatment. Their greatest danger arises from the fact that they may be treated as substitutes for the Holy Spirit and may be allowed to usurp His rightful position. *They imply or tend to imply the independence of man apart from God.*

There is a number of these forces inimical to the Holy Spirit and these merit some attention. "Little children," says the Bible, "keep yourselves from idols" (John 5: 21). This verse applies to these varied topics for they all tend or try to substitute something else in the place which the Spirit should occupy. In themselves, these need not necessarily be wrong but in their common forms they are, for they make men think that they are self sufficient and can supply the deepest human needs.

Amongst such we may number secularism,

materialism, scientism, humanism, intellectualism and progress.

“Scientism” or “scientolatry” is a term which describes a false extension of scientific method, and fails to realize its implications. It verges on making science sufficient to meet every need and thereby becomes an anti-religious force. Intellectualism means that complete reliance upon knowledge where men tend to identify knowing the good with doing the good. Both infer that man does not need spiritual help. Another aspect of these dangers is the tendency to think that when we have explained something we can regard it as within our power, or even that we can do without it. There is also the variant that some hope to describe everything and rule out all mystery and all element of awe. This is a type of humanism which is antagonistic to the Spirit. It finds a clear example in Swinburne’s line,

“Glory to Man in the Highest
For man is the maker of things.”

God has been left out for man can manage satisfactorily without Him. Such a type of humanism is linked to an idea of automatic progress as a forward march of human happiness, due to education and technics, mechanical, scientific and technical aids; human welfare and happiness is bound

to go forward and the task is one which man unaided can achieve for himself. These aspects of humanism and progress have been attacked so thoroughly that there is little point in repeating the criticisms since the majority of thinkers now see their inadequacy.

World events also show how wrong such opinions are. Our present objection to them is that they are in direct antagonism to belief in the active, powerful operation of the Holy Spirit. We may summarize their defect in the words of one who speaks with unique qualifications on the point, Arnold Toynbee, the historian of the rise and fall of civilizations. He says that "there is no warrant for supposing, within 'historical times', there has been any progress — in human nature — either physical or spiritual."

In three ways the common idea of progress (which is closely linked to materialism and secularism) may be called a foe of the Spirit. Hence what is said about progress applies to the other two. First, it seeks to avoid being reliant upon God, and professes to be independent. This might well be the most serious point of opposition but the next is also great. Progress fails to reckon with the facts of personal sin and social evil. It has not grasped the complexities of life and the drawbacks

inherited from the past, causing evil and hostility and greed in the present and hindering all improvement. Lastly, it conceives of steady advance, an inevitable progress which man can make by his own power. History refutes such an assumption.

The topics with which we have been dealing can be called foes of the Spirit because they often assert their independence of Him. Next we come to those which oppose and are hostile to Him and so let us think about sin itself. Sin is several times spoken of as sin against the Spirit. Since the Spirit can be grieved, resisted or quenched this is quite natural. Sometimes sins against goodness are felt in some special degree to be sins against the Holy Spirit.

Special types of the sin against goodness which came perilously close to the sin of blasphemy are mentioned. Writers couple presumption and despair, then impenitence and hardness of heart and also say that to resist what we have already acknowledged as truth and show envy towards others who have made better use of God's grace than ourselves are very severe faults. These sins are so common and treated ordinarily with such lightness and disregard that their mention is wholesome. They are specially dangerous because they

shut out those means by which the Holy Spirit might work upon us.

The attitudes of mind and the actions mentioned in previous paragraphs can be easily developed to apply with great force and directness to individual and corporate life at the present. The way in which people use money is an obvious example. It is used to obtain social standing, to achieve a glow of self satisfaction, to provide a sop to conscience, to gain a reputation for being generous, perhaps to stave off a demand for social justice, to pay one's debts to God and feel that He can be faced with confidence because a money payment can atone for sin and selfishness. This is the modern equivalent of sacrificing animals, mentioned in the Old Testament as a way to placate or please God (cf. Micah 6: 6ff). Direct applications of the other dangerous sins can be made almost as easily to our own lives and to that of the Church as a whole for in such cases judgment should begin at the house of God.

All sin grieves the Holy Spirit and ingratitude, neglect, carelessness, unfaithfulness and indifference fall under this heading. But even if we fall into the gravest of these sins it does not necessarily follow that the Spirit will leave us.

We may link forgiveness of sin with freedom

from sin. It is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that any sin can be overcome. He alone can renew and restore us and enable us to repent, have faith and obey. He is the Spirit of discipline, of self-control and self-mastery and one of His main works is to free the believer and purify him (I Timothy 1:7). *The Spirit can forgive us and through His help we can conquer sin.*

We should make an attempt to explain what is meant by the sin of blasphemy mentioned in St. Matthew 12: 31f, and the similar verses of St. Mark 3: 28-30, and St. Luke 12: 10. Here are St. Mark's words.

“Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme;
But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.”

Many writers agree that this sin is a set, malicious opposition to what we know is true or good. Most authors explain the sin as convinced hostility by the doers against the Spirit and against His enlightening of them.

Every grave sin committed after baptism is not the sin against the Holy Ghost. This sin, says one writer, lies in some contradiction to the “pardon-

ing terms or way of God", rather than in the actual greatness of the fault. It is some severe sort of unbelief or impenitence or something of that nature. Such resistance is so great that there can be no means of overcoming it since the doer has already withstood the operation of the Spirit. He, who after being convicted of the truth of Christ and His disciples' works, denies that they are of God and fathers them on the devil has fallen into this sin and become an object incapable of God's mercy. Others say that profane scoffing, perverse unbelief, malicious opposition to truth can lead to the unpardonable sin. Also there are degrees of blasphemy and we might remember that no one to-day can be in exactly the same circumstances as those in the time of our Lord. Total denial of Christ may well be the nearest approach which people at the present can make to blasphemy against the Spirit. All these points indicate that few to-day are likely to fall into this unpardonable sin. There are not many who would ascribe the works of Christ to the powers of evil or evil forces.

We may well endorse Bishop Moule's words (in his book on the Holy Spirit "Veni Creator", page 22) that it is easier to say what "this great acme and development of sin is not, than what it is". It implies a "resolved, deliberate and matured

hostility and repulsion on the part of the will; a personal hatred of recognized eternal holiness". It denies all place for the action of the Spirit. Bishop Moule thought that as long as believers depend on the Spirit, not on themselves or their own goodness, they cannot fall into this sin.

Closely connected with sin is the reality for the New Testament writers of hostile spiritual powers. For St. Paul there were spiritual forces at work actively thwarting the Holy Spirit so that between the two the spiritual struggle continued. We have largely lost sight or rather discarded this idea and perhaps lost a lot and rendered what we may call their undercover operations easier because we have provided such an excellent camouflage.

How may we hinder the spirit? The Spirit can be grieved by resistance, and He can also be resisted to such a degree that His approach to a particular person is made to cease. This fact, as a solemn possibility, has to be stressed. Possibly even those who strive to serve Him resist and grieve Him more than they realize. Because the Holy Spirit offers Himself as a gift, men can refuse to receive Him; because they are free agents they must make a response, though the initiation of relationship lies with Him. Much of what is said about grieving, resisting and quenching the Holy

Spirit applies to any of these particular attitudes of man and so we may mention them together reserving particular points till later.

Refusal to obey the Spirit or to accept the Spirit's aid grieves Him. The Spirit offers to be a guest in a human life; we grieve Him by refusing to give Him lodging. But also when He has made His temple within us we can grieve, resist or quench Him through sin which, if persisted in, may finally quench His indwelling presence. It may be sinful words or acts, or it may be carelessness, or indifference to His promptings, or neglect to receive Him. Sins against our bodies grieve Him for our bodies are to be His temple (see I Corinthians 5: 15ff); so does unfaithfulness to our resolutions and vows, and lack of gratitude for mercies received and blessings enjoyed. Departure from principles and our natural pride, as well as other forms of sin, produce the same result. Hostile ideas, the cares of business, immersion in pleasure are also causes of grief and of resistance to the Spirit. Our rather lengthy list is not complete until we add that certain thoughts, the rejection of friendly advice, or the exhortations of a spiritual adviser, or the rebukes of our own conscience, if unheeded, can cause the Spirit to be quenched. Sometimes specific sins are mentioned by writers

on this topic, for example, untruthfulness, unjust anger, stealing.

May the suggestion be made that this last paragraph be used for self examination and that each of us may search our lives to see if we are resisting or grieving the Spirit. Why not reread the section with this object in view?

Constant resisting or grieving may lead to quenching the Spirit. This may happen in the case of the sins just mentioned, for the Spirit will not always strive with man. The fire may die out in our hearts, or we may cause it to be put out in the heart of another. We may do so by disobedience, persistent dislike of doing His will caused by wilful sin or even by fear of consequences. It may happen due to base compromise, by preferring honour and praise from men, ease and popularity, dignity or fame instead of heeding the Spirit's voice.

We have been dealing with the words grieve, resist and quench concerning our relationship with the Spirit but there are other words used which have a similar flavour to which some attention should be given though the application may not be so direct.

We may ignore the Spirit. Though we may have been told that we cannot live the Chris-

tian life without Him, and that spiritual growth depends upon His indwelling, yet we may not bother to subject ourselves to Him. We think that we can be perfected in the flesh. Thus we may either neglect Him or think that our becoming like Christ is a matter of human effort. In either case the result is the same. *If we ignore Him we fail to honour Him.*

We may do "despite to the Spirit of grace (Hebrews 10: 29). This happens when we try to gain His aid for wrong purposes or by wrong means. Simon Magus in Acts, Chapter 8, is a good example. He thought that by giving a sum of money he would be able to confer the gift of the Spirit on others, but his heart was not right before God. He had a wrong idea of the Spirit. His conception, like that of many Christian people, was not high enough. They often think of the Spirit as lower than the Father or the Son while He is equal in glory, co-eternal in majesty, infinite, uncreated with the other Persons of the Trinity.

People may also tempt the Spirit as Ananias and Sapphira did by trying to deceive Him (Acts 5: 1-11). Ananias himself had lied to the Holy Ghost in that he had tried to deceive the Church either as a whole or in her chosen representatives. Perhaps also we often seek His aid for selfish pur-

poses, for things upon which or about which we could not ask His blessing. To seek to make use of Him when it suits us is to do despite to Him.

So to-day many try to get credit where credit is not due to them, many appear to give lavishly, to make great efforts, but this is deception. Many tempt and lie to the Spirit by word or deed in making their consecration appear fuller than they know it is. Ignoring, doing despite to Him, tempting Him and lying to Him are probably more common than is realized and many who wish to love Him well may unconsciously fall into one or more of them.

We might read these pages again and make them a valuable meditation for the devotional life, a means of self examination, as well as an aid to stress the reality of the Spirit's action. We should reread these pages also and see if we are hindering, hurting or harming the Spirit in any of the ways mentioned.

The gravity of our failures and faults is increased because of the engagements, the vows and promises into which Christians have entered, the expectations God has of them and the privileges and blessings, all the endearments, which He has showered upon them. We have promised loyalty to God; He has done much for and given much to

us and so if we break promises made with God it amounts to admitting the control of the world, the flesh and the devil upon us.

If He is continually resisted, the Spirit withdraws. This is due to the will and purpose of God and the general design of the Gospel. God also in such cases withdraws the Spirit for His own honour and as a punishment to the sinner. These statements mention some of the results of a wrong attitude to the Spirit but there are others. Punishment itself is preceded by bringing upon the sinner God's displeasure and aversion while he continues to sin. These are linked to hardness of heart, a disobedient mind, and may even lead to the unpardonable sin.

Finally it is worthy of note that many of the things which grieve or quench the Holy Spirit or create resistance to Him are what might be called social sins. This insight reminds us how deeply our faith is corporate and how the Holy Spirit is active in the body of Christ since harm done by or to any member of the body can hurt the Spirit.

Readings:—Romans 8: 7-25; Galatians 5: 16-21;

Ephesians 4: 17-31; Philippians 3: 17-21.

Hymns:—481, 720.

Prayers:

O merciful God, grant that the old Adam in this

child may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in him.

Grant that all carnal affections may die in him, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in him.

Grant that he may have power and strength, to have victory, and to triumph against the devil, the world, and the flesh. (*Book of Common Prayer, page 297.*)

'For remembrance of God's presence'

O heavenly Father, in whom we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray thee so to guide and govern us by thy Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our daily life we may never forget thee, but remember that we are ever walking in thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (*Book of Common Prayer, page 732.*)

Almighty and Everlasting God, who of thy great mercy in Jesus Christ, thy Son, dost grant us forgiveness of sin, and all things pertaining to life and godliness: Grant us, we beseech thee, thy Holy Spirit, that He may so rule our hearts, that we, being ever mindful of thy fatherly mercy, may strive to mortify the flesh, and to overcome the world; and, serving thee in holiness and pureness of living, may give thee continual thanks for all thy goodness; through the same Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord.

6

THE SOCIETY DEPENDENT UPON HIS WORK

THE *Spirit is the giver of life to the Church.* He will be permanent and abiding, unless He is driven away. He inhabits and makes the Church alive as the human spirit does the natural body. As He prepared at the period of the Incarnation a natural body for Christ so now He seeks to prepare and perfect the Church, He rules, directs, guides and governs her. It is He who informs, He who enlivens, He who actuates the Church, He who is the source of all her powers, no matter how He may be hidden. The Church is absolutely and utterly dependent upon the Spirit.

The distinctive feature which makes the Church a unique association, is that she is a Spirit-filled community. The Spirit is the source and supply of her fellowship. The new gift is shared —

shared between the members and they are to share it with others. Belief in the Spirit is the root of all conscious fellowship between Christians and the cause of the self sacrifice which one should make for the welfare of another, or for the welfare of the whole. Brotherly love will testify to the effective working of the Spirit. Moreover, the unique gift prevents the fellowship becoming one of cranks, preening themselves on some supposed superiority, censorious of others. Again its unity will not depend on outward forms; these will indicate and express an inner unity but they will not create unity; they will be instruments for the better fulfilment of the purposes of the community. The presence of the Spirit is the only infallible test whereby the Church can prove her claims to a fellowship of the Spirit.

This theme of fellowship, this corporate nature of individual membership may be illustrated from baptism in which we are made members of the universal Church, not of a particular Church, or a certain sect or a local congregation. The promise of the Spirit was to a collective body and not to generation after generation of believers as separated individuals. The manifestation of the Spirit was for the good of the whole Church.

“And he (Christ) gave some to be apostles;

and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4: 11 and 12). Therefore one logical result of stating our belief in the Spirit in the Creed is the next clause about the Church and the communion of saints.

The spiritual gifts mentioned in the first Epistle to the Corinthians (Chapter 12) are subordinate to the love of the brethren and the edifying of the Church. The Spirit indwells in the person who is an integral part of a vast social and spiritual body. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit was given to the community gathered together, not to separated individuals, or to a selected band. "Each receives his manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (I Corinthians 12: 7 in Moffatt's translation). F. D. Maurice wrote

"The Spirit dwells in the body and in each of its members as such, and not as individuals."
"The gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost," said another writer, "are scattered and given unto every member of the same Church, not so much for their particular profit and commodity, as for the general profit and com-

modity of the whole congregation and Church.”

How does the Spirit work in and through the Church? Let us look at some of the ways. We find that the gift of ministry, the power and the authority to exercise it, all these were ascribed to the Spirit. The Church claims no lower sanction or origin for the ministry and the orders of the ministry than the Holy Spirit. Any man who enters the ministry without call or mission is guilty of sacrilege and possesses no gifts of the Spirit for his work. To take ordination vows means to receive the power of the Spirit for guidance, direction and strengthening. Hooker, himself an ordained Anglican clergyman, writes some weighty words,

“Whether,” he says, speaking of the ministry, “we preach, pray, baptize, communicate, condemn, give absolution, or whatsoever, as dispensers of God’s mysteries, our words, judgments, acts and deeds, are not ours but the Holy Ghost’s.”

Agreement that the Spirit makes use of ordinances, the Bible, the Creeds, the Ministry, the Sacraments, needs to be supplemented by pointing out possible dangers or misconceptions. Some may forget that the ordinances are but means of grace,

and that they have no intrinsic virtue in themselves. People who forget this truth may exalt the ordinances unduly and also forget that it is the Spirit and He alone who renders them powerful. As well it has also happened that this point of view has led those who hold it to regard sacraments or ordinances in a mechanical way. This means that they regard the performance of them in the prescribed way, using the correct ritual and forms, as of spiritual value apart from the attitude of either or both of the officiant and the worshippers or participants. A right idea, however, always implies faith.

On the other hand partly because other people are of a different mould of temperament the contrary has occurred. These go to the opposite extreme and stress the fact that the ordinances are no more than means only to such a degree that they tend to neglect them and even try to dispense with them. These do so on the ground of sanctioning nothing which may appear to mitigate or obscure God's position. Their tendency to flout appointed and recognized ways may be caused — and in the past has been caused — by the readiness of the former group to exalt them unduly and treat them in a crudely magical fashion. But it is also caused by the tendency of a certain cast of

mind to seek direct contact between soul and Spirit, between the human and the divine, between man and God. Such direct contact is not generally the method used by the Spirit.

But let us return to our main idea. When we speak of the Church we often say that it is one, holy, catholic and apostolic. These four adjectives are called the four notes of the Church and there are close bonds between each of them and the Spirit.

The author and source of the Church's holiness is the Spirit. There are several senses in which the Church may be called holy and in the different senses of the word 'holy', as applied to the Church, the links with the Spirit are deep and intimate. The Church is holy because she is called of the holy God and this call comes generation after generation through the Spirit. Here is one meaning of the phrase the "holiness of the Church". Another is that the Church is holy in that her members are called individually to be saints, they should be holy in their lives. In this meaning both the calling and the degree of actuality achieved are the work of the Spirit. But also, the Church is holy because she is the bride of Christ and as two become one flesh in marriage so by virtue of her

marriage to the divine Bridegroom she is holy in an additional manner.

The truth of the holiness of the Church might be likened to a rope composed of several different strands. But if we examine the material we shall find that it is the same material in each of the strands. If the analogy be permitted the material in each case is the Spirit. As Executor of Godhead He utters the call. He is the prime agent in setting aside the Church or the Christian for holiness and His power alone can turn potentiality into actuality. He alone in each generation can sanctify the Church and render her fit to be the bride of Christ.

What then are the effects of the Spirit's efforts to make the Church holy, not only in intention but in actuality? In calling the Church the bride of Christ there are thoughts of union with the Bridegroom and of dependence upon Him. The union is maintained by the Spirit; the needs of the bride are supplied by Him. The Church is enabled to fulfil her duty to her Lord and to meet His desire for her holiness, purity and obedience, only through the indwelling of the Spirit. The maintenance, retention and deepening of these qualities are necessary for the future welfare of the Church that she may be presented "holy and without blemish".

The unity of the Church is created and maintained by the Spirit. According to the New Testament the gifts of the Spirit are given in a manner which links and joins each part more closely to form one whole. He is the 'cement' or 'glue' of the Church and if at the present moment the effort to heal Church divisions is not due to His action then the reunion movement is nothing but illusion. The Spirit, despite our divisions, sins, differences in doctrine and practice, maintains a unity. There is one Spirit. The fruit of His operation, love and unity still persist. Therefore the Church has not to create unity, but to remove barriers to its expression caused by different factors.

The Spirit binds together, maintains and deepens unity. There is only one Spirit and because this is so there can only be one Body of Christ and the action of the Spirit makes this possible.

The unifying action of the Spirit has a two fold aspect. He dwells in each member of a local Church and binds them into a corporate unity, but also He dwells in all the faithful everywhere so creating the worldwide Church. Much of this is implicit in the Ephesian metaphor of the building where St. Paul says that believers are builded together for an habitation of God through the

Spirit (Ephesians 2: 22). It is the operation of the Spirit in each personal unit which enables the units to make and maintain a contribution to the unity and completeness of the whole. The deeper the unity with the "corner stone" the greater the unity and strength of the whole, and this object can only be achieved with the help of the Holy Spirit. The body only remains one while it is made one by the Spirit.

The relationship of one Christian to another is not like that of individuals who happen to run together to one place because there has been an accident there, it is rather that of one of a team, but even this is not exact. The relationships of Christian bodies to each other is not that of different fraternal clubs (Lions, I.O.D.E. or such like) meeting for social gatherings, much less it is like that of different nations engaged in a trade rivalry. The difference between these bodies or persons and Christian people or Christian bodies is that the latter are indwelt and united by one Spirit.

Let us pass on from the unity of the Church to her Catholicity. If we examine the relation between catholicity and the Spirit in the light of a famous definition that of Cyril of Jerusalem, writing about 350 A.D., we may see its truth and

meaning. Cyril said that the Church's catholicity consisted in four points, namely, world wide extension, wholeness and completeness of the faith, its validity and value for all mankind no matter where and when they lived and its ability to meet every human need and sin.

Let us look at these one by one. It was through the endowments granted at Pentecost that the first missionary movement of the Church began. The Spirit caused the beginning of world-wide extension and often in the history of missions each step forward has been caused by, or linked with, some specific moving of the Spirit. The day of Pentecost itself illustrates the point for on that day the barrier of different languages was overcome. Today we see one development of this in the fact that the societies for translating and propagating the Scriptures are the handmaids of the whole missionary work of the Church.

The work of the Spirit in relation to the wholeness and soundness of Christian doctrine is by no means so obvious but do we not realize our dependence upon His leading for crucial decisions on matters of faith? Also it is the Spirit who enables us to maintain a right balance in our beliefs. When one point is over-emphasized, the result is that another is often depreciated too much and so

heresy results. Examples can be found in the disputes concerning the nature of our Lord. But the Holy Spirit's action can safeguard us against such calamities. Also the history of the Church has shown that wrong belief is often caused by failing to relate one doctrine correctly with others and hold them in just proportion. A modern illustration might be found in the stress laid by British-Israelites upon the literal fulfilment of the Old Testament. *But the Spirit preserves the faith of the Catholic Church.*

The conception of the Catholic Church as meant for "all sorts and conditions of men" can also be made actual by the Spirit, and by Him alone. One of the purposes of the Church's holiness is that she might include those outside her and sanctify them. Here the missionary task and the variety of those who are to be included within the Church's fellowship and unity are brought into close conjunction. Furthermore, natural differences of sex, colour, race and culture can be met and transcended only in the unity created by the Spirit.

Similarly, if the Church is to fulfil the function of a physician in different ages and countries, under different conditions and to diverse people, it can be carried out only, and in proportion, as the

Spirit is active. The Spirit is both a surgeon and a physician who can heal mankind. This applies to problems both of personal and social life.

In order to summarize our treatment of these matters we may say that in the realization of any or all of these four aspects of the Church's catholicity the Spirit plays an essential part. Not only is this so concerning catholicity but it applies to the other three notes of the Church. We are, however, not working our assertion out in the case of apostolicity since enough has perhaps been said concerning the faith of the Church to make the point sufficiently obvious. *Both catholicity and apostolicity are preserved by the Spirit's operations.*

While the Spirit divides His gifts He unites the recipients in one body. He is the chief executive, the business manager, the managing director of the Church; He administers and controls the Body of Christ. Therefore here and now the Spirit is the active ruler of the Church.

What about the Spirit and the reunion of the Church? Little has been said in the foregoing pages about this topic. This omission has been made purposely because the matter needs to be viewed in the light of the four notes of the Church, not just that of unity. First we must remember that one function of the Spirit is to unify. Some

Pauline passages really centre round this idea. In Ephesians, Chapter 4, St. Paul puts seven unities together, one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God. Christ has only one body and to sin against the body, to divide it, to acquiesce in retaining or in maintaining its division is grave sin.

But because we live in an era of rapid change and because of the force of the points we have been considering we must be more careful to listen for the voice of the Spirit and to obey His leading. In the light of these factors no institution, no historical heritage, no valued tradition, no hitherto unquestioned assumption, no accepted situation, can make good its claim to be exempt from scrutiny. This might be said to be part of the meaning of the slogan, "Let the Church be the Church" or might we not say "Let the Church be the home of the Spirit", "let the Spirit fill the Church."

Readings:—Acts 2: 41-47; Romans 8: 14-27; I Corinthinians 12: 4-13; Ephesians 2: 14-22, 4: 1-15; I Peter 2: 5-10.

Hymns:—179, 265, 486, 556.

Prayers:

Keep, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy Church with thy perpetual mercy; and, because the frailty

of man without thee cannot but fall, keep us ever by thy help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (*Book of Common Prayer, page 205.*)

O Lord, we beseech thee, let thy continual pity cleanse and defend thy Church; and because it cannot continue in safety without thy succour, preserve it evermore by thy help and goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (*Book of Common Prayer, page 207.*)

Lord, we beseech thee to keep thy household the Church in continual godliness; that through thy protection it may be free from all adversities, and devoutly given to serve thee in good works, to the glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (*Book of Common Prayer, page 217.*)

For Unity

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace: Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord: that, as there is but one Body, and one Spirit, and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all; so we may henceforth be all

of one heart, and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (*Book of Common Prayer, page 48.*)

7

THE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF HIS WORK

THE Holy Spirit enriches our human life. He develops our judgment, powers and knowledge. He takes and uses all those characteristics which make each one of us unique and different from all other people. In more biblical language the Spirit becomes the fashioner of the new man at every stage of the process.

We shall examine His working in our conversion (the action in which we turn to God), considering the Spirit's work in relation to the beginning of the Christian life and its immediate consequences.

The contention that He always works instantly and irresistibly is not congenial to the way in which human nature is made, nor does it agree with man's experience of His operation. The

Spirit acts knowing the nature of man and in such a way as to make our own efforts and endeavours necessary. His earnest, loving and persistent efforts may be resisted; in stubborn hearts and wills no place is left — much less found — for Him. He does not force an entrance.

We find Him working to create both repentance and faith as well as obedience. True Christian faith is His work and His alone. Indeed He works these effects not only upon us but in us. Without His action, realized or not, men would have remained deaf to Christ's invitations to come to Him and by faith in Him to be saved. There is both before and also after our turning in faith and repentance what has been called "a mysterious commerce" between the Spirit and the believer. In these matters we must not fail to realize that the Holy Spirit's work is prior to our response. Something is imparted; love is shed abroad; a divine seed is implanted.

In all actions connected with our conversion the varied and vivid expressions of Scripture merit consideration. We are born again, born of the Spirit, quickened, have our hearts circumcised, are given a new heart and spirit, a heart of flesh for a heart of stone; we are reconciled, we awake from sleep, pass from darkness to light, from death

to life, we are saved by the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Spirit. *In every aspect the effective agent is the Spirit.*

The initial effects of His work are that the understanding becomes illuminated, the conscience convinced, the sinner despairs of his own competence to save himself, the rebel surrenders, the suppliant looks to Christ, uttering a cry for mercy. So the individual becomes ready to obey, reconciled to God; he perceives the reality and wonder of God's love; he feels that he ought to follow Christ.

The word regeneration (which is often used to describe this change) can be taken in different senses but here it is sufficient to state that no matter what shade of meaning, wide or narrow, the word regeneration receives, no matter whether its effects are only a start, no matter whether these are lasting effects in the individual or not, there is general agreement that the agent is the Holy Ghost; without Him there can be no regeneration.

Furthermore our awareness of forgiveness is made real to us by the Spirit. We know that God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. The effects of forgiveness bring home to us the tremendous reality and blessing of the Spirit's work for the individual. For example, modern psychology

speaks of the cathartic and cleansing effect of telling one's troubles and failures and sins, but this was anticipated long ago in the exhortation of the Anglican Communion Service which admonishes those whose consciences are unquiet to go to their clergyman and open their grief to him. But the Christian believer enjoys a far greater and richer experience. He is aware that he is forgiven, that the burden weighing him down has been removed. He is forgiven through the Spirit.

The previous pages have tried to show the connection between the Spirit and conversion. Next we will consider our communion with the Spirit and the character which He produces. In other words, we would investigate additional aspects of the place of the Spirit in the work of our redemption, that is, our liberation from sin, and restoration to what God mean us to be.

If we think about redemption now it will provide a fairly natural point of transition to the other two aspects of the Spirit's dealings with the individual believer since a full and final redemption involves both conversion to God, communion with God and a character enriched by God.

The Spirit seals, confirms and applies our redemption to us. Christ has finished His part and now the Spirit takes up the work of man's redemp-

tion which implies man's restoration. He carries on the work of Christ and co-operates with Him. Christ has accomplished everything.

"But the treasure lies yet in one pile; it is not yet distributed nor invested. Consequently, if we are to possess it the Holy Spirit must come and teach our hearts to believe and say: I, too, am one of those who are to have this treasure."

He invests the treasure in us.

An illustration will clarify the place of the Spirit in enabling the individual to partake of what Christ did for the human race. Sir F. Banting discovered the value and properties of what we call insulin. A cure for diabetes was available. But it was only as doctors all over the world learned about what he had done that they were able to use his discovery for the healing of diabetics.

The ordinary doctor was the agent through whom the separate individual sufferers became able to receive the benefits of the newly found treatment.

It is through His operation that we are delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Romans 8: 21). He implants filial love to God in our hearts, He enables us to know what sonship means, what are

its blessings and requirements and grants spiritual endowments to fulfil the later. He enables us to transform what would otherwise be duty into loving obedience.

“By his expounding, the divine mysteries are opened to us; by his light, the eyes of our souls are made clear to understand them; . . . by his strength, sinful flesh is subdued and tamed, and corrupt desires are bridled and restrained.”

How can we be certain of our sonship or what the Bible sometimes calls “adoption”?

Adoption and assurance are closely connected and the witness of the Spirit is the ground and proof of both. Assurance is not a common idea today, yet it is a New Testament fact.

The central verses of the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans provides the most definite statements about adoption and assurance (Romans 8: 21). There need be no “haziness about the fact or the character of the experience”. Obedience and the inward assurance go hand in hand. We know that we are the sons of God because we love God.

Our communion in and with the Spirit is caused by His indwelling. His presence in our lives, something which is natural to New Testament

Christianity is regarded as exceptional in our twentieth century. "The Spirit of truth," said Jesus, "dwelleth with you and shall be in you." "The Spirit of God dwelleth in you," said St. Paul. When we say that it is natural to the New Testament we do not deny its occurrence in the Old. One of the most vivid phrases bringing home to us what it means by the Spirit's indwelling is found in the book of Judges. Here a verse referring to God's presence with Gideon may be translated to read, "the Spirit of the Lord clothed itself with Gideon" (Judges 6: 34. R.V. Margin). This metaphor is worth continually recollecting on the matter of the Spirit's indwelling.

We may think of two aspects of it; *we are in the Spirit and the Spirit in us*. Many years ago the writer heard the idea illustrated by the thought of a bottle into which sea water was poured and then the bottle was put in the sea. Though inadequate and imperfect in many ways the simile emphasises the twofold relationship. In our discussion of the fellowship of the Church, we have dealt with the first aspect (that we are in the Spirit).

Now we shall consider the Spirit's indwelling in the individual. He is to dwell in our heart, which was for the Hebrew the central, the focal point of the thought, affection and will, of the whole inner

consciousness. He takes up residence. He is a permanent Guest. We become aware of His presence and our awareness need not be narrowly limited to any one great crisis. Every stage in spiritual life can be thought of as a fresh arrival, and every fall into sin may be reckoned as a departure, however partial or temporary, of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit indwells in the Christian and so we may sing "fill", "come back", "come afresh", come forth from within and possess all our lives. This usage would be in line with that of the New Testament which teaches that the Spirit has come to the believer with the desire to abide with him.

Abiding implies the constant, continual presence of the Spirit. He comes to dwell in and abide with the believer. This is an emphasis of the new covenant and is a point of contrast with the old. In the old the Spirit "came" upon people and wrought upon them; in the new He "abode" and dwelt permanently with and within them. In the old His action was intermittent and spasmodic while it was steady and constant in the new.

Where the Spirit dwells the effects are varied and significant. Our spiritual development is the certain evidence of the Spirit's indwelling. He never lies idle and dormant in the soul, but is an

active agent, effecting His purpose. We shall become aware of His indwelling. Living in the Spirit means that we are endowed with His gifts, or some of them at least. We live under His influence, obedient to His will. We are inspired to a life revealing kindness of nature, uprightness of conduct and soundness of opinion.

The results of the Spirit's indwelling will be that we will "walk as children of light" possessed of a sound mind realizing the "hope of our calling" and the greatness of God's power to believers. Therefore we shall be mindful of the things of the Spirit, not glorying in what we have done, but in what He has done in us. Fear will be cast out and we shall be made aware of the love of God. Thus day by day we shall not walk in darkness but as children of light. In these scriptural metaphors of walking and abiding — implying constancy, endurance and progress — we see something of how the Spirit works.

The bringing forth of the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, self-control, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness) is the proof that we are led by the Spirit of God. The results of His dwelling will be seen not so much in special manifestations as by purified affections, obedient wills, disciplined thoughts and a holy life.

His operation produces results in our daily behaviour.

He guides us but it may be asked how can we know when we are guided and illuminated by the Spirit? It is not enough to reply that His guidance comes in a steady continual direction of life or that it is known by the fruits. It is helpful to us in this connection to learn that when we incline to what is good, when we are bent to do God's will or to perform our duty then we may infer that we are guided by the Spirit. But we need to go into more detail for this is a very real problem to many Christians.

The Spirit guides us through His calls to us or direct commands, our convictions, our conscience and our circumstances. We have noted all through that God generally uses ordinary means if possible, working through natural means by using human faculties and agencies. The same principle is operative in the matter of guidance.

Direct clear calls are the exception; extraordinary manifestations are uncommon; miraculous interventions rarely occur. They do at times and testimony can be found, but sometimes it is only after these events have happened and we have obeyed them that we realize that they are calls from God. Indeed both in the case of such calls

and the other methods used by the Spirit it is only after we obey that we often become aware of the fact that the Holy Spirit has guided us. God, said Luther, had led him — but only like an old blind horse. It was only when Peter obeyed the vision he saw at Joppa and went with the messengers from Cornelius that he realized God had planned both (Acts, Chapter 10).

The Bible, our own faith and obedience have a large share in forming our convictions. As we often receive guidance by means of our convictions we can easily see that in this way the Bible, faith and obedience fulfil one specific part of their functions; they act as instruments of the Spirit's operation. Again, the home we have, the friends we make, the hobbies and amusements in which we like to take part, the Church fellowship we enjoy or the contrary, the environment, the period in which we live — these all influence our convictions. Sometimes it is by what we find congenial, or at other times what is hostile, sceptical, disturbing or critical. But in and through them our aims and ideals, our convictions are formed and if these are Christian *our convictions will often be a medium for the Spirit's guidance.*

Knowledge has a definite place in these convictions. There must be knowledge of God and His

ways, gained so often from the Bible and from history. Knowledge of man is also gained from the Bible, from history and from examining our own life. From the same sources we get knowledge of ourselves, our surroundings, temptations, good and bad points, gifts and weaknesses. All these enable us to have guidance to discern the courses of action to which God is calling us. Knowledge helps to give us our convictions, to enable us to know why we hold them, and what we can do to advance them.

Our convictions and our conscience are in close relationship and hence it is natural that the Spirit will also use our conscience. Conscience justly claims special attention concerning guidance. The education and strengthening of conscience is required to know what is the Spirit's leading and also to develop its own sensitivity. The oftener we obey it the more value it will be and the more accurately will it reproduce the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It will become ever more accurately, precisely tuned in to receive the divine voice. *Conscience then is frequently a method used by the Spirit.*

Very often, however, *God guides us by means of circumstances.* Their place in divine guidance is sometimes that of hindrance, sometimes that of

help. They may provide opportunities which appeal to us or are congenial to our aptitudes and powers. There are cases where unexpected doors seem to open and perhaps remove difficulties or strengthen the direction of our minds. Circumstances are one of the most common ways through which the Spirit works and the whole Bible is a sort of commentary upon the fact. It has much to teach us, especially in its striking events such as the lives of the patriarchs, the rise and fall of Israel, the lessons of the exile.

Perhaps nowhere is this more apparent, — and how fittingly so,—than in the Acts of the Apostles, the Gospel of the Holy Ghost. Even persecutions opened the way for Church extension. Due to these persecutions the Christians were scattered around through Samaria and Judaea (Acts 8: 2; 11: 19ff). The removal of the hindrance of Saul the persecutor must have had a far reaching effect. Then, on the other hand, we find the author telling us that the Spirit forbade the missionaries to preach in Asia, and did not suffer them to go into Bithynia. Thus when some doors were closed the call to Macedonia was the more easy to hear (Acts 16: 6-9). So it often is; several doors are shut that we may “perceive and know what things we ought to do”. To-day these doors are often

pressure of events, personal circumstances, family commitments, special duties and such like.

Again the whole of the Acts of the Apostles shows another characteristic of God's guidance; that often we are shown only one step at a time; life is walking along a way where there are many sharp turns round which we cannot see till we come right up to them. In other words we will meet with problems, problems with which we cannot deal till we are faced with them, and problems upon which *daily fresh guidance may have to be sought*.

Much of what we have said is very desirable. Yes, it is desirable, yet we are liable to forget that there is a price to be paid, that there are conditions which must be fulfilled, for example, faith, obedience, love to God and man, an unswerving warfare against all forms of sin in our own lives. The consequences of the indwelling of the Spirit are so great as to give us pause because of their awe-inspiring nature. Some words of William Temple emphasise the fact.

“When we pray ‘Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire’, we had better know what we are about. He will not carry us to easy triumphs and gratifying successes; more probably He will set us to some task for God in the

full intention that we shall fail, so that others, learning wisdom by our failure, may carry the good cause forward. He may take us through loneliness, desertion by friends, apparent desertion even by God; that was the way Christ went to the Father. He may drive us into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He may lead us from the Mount of Transfiguration (if He ever lets us climb it) to the hill that is called the Place of a Skull, for if we invoke Him, it must be to help us in doing God's will, not ours. We cannot call upon the

‘Creator Spirit, by whose aid

The world's foundations first were laid’,
in order to use omnipotence for the supply of our futile pleasures or the success of our futile plans. If we invoke Him, we must be ready for the glorious pain of being caught by His power out of our petty orbit into the eternal purposes of the Almighty, in whose onward sweep our lives are as a speck of dust. The soul that is filled with the Spirit must have become purged of all pride or love of ease, all self-complacence and self reliance; but that soul has found the only real dignity, the only lasting joy. Come then, Great Spirit, come.

Convict the world; and convict my timid soul" (*Readings in St. John's Gospel*, p. 288).

Communion in and with the Holy Spirit is caused by His indwelling and *His indwelling leaves a mark on our character*. Thus growth in character, what it means and what flows from it might itself be recorded as a result of the Spirit's indwelling, and so we realize even more forcibly the importance of the idea of indwelling. The Christian can be transformed by the renewing of his mind. Such a glorious possibility lies open to him because of the effective ministration of the Holy Ghost. This unveiled glory is the glory of Christian character whereby through the operation of the Lord, the Spirit, we are transformed from glory to glory (II Corinthians 3: 8, 18). The transformation can effect every part of our being for its consequences are apparent in our judgment, our disposition and our practice. One consequence is that of increased strength and depth of character. We are strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inward man (Ephesians 3: 16). The wonderful riches of the Spirit are received by the believer.

We can go even further in pointing out one implication of what we have been asserting. Like the parable of the talents so are the gifts of the Spirit, the more we employ them, the better we use them,

the richer they become—the more they are rightly employed so much more they shine. We can go from grace to grace, from strength to strength, ever gaining fresh strength from the indwelling Spirit. This is seen in the bringing forth of the fruit of the Spirit and it is part of the process of sanctification, of being made holy. *The Spirit alone can make us holy in character.*

Concerning holiness of character let us consider very briefly some thoughts arising from the idea of Christians as a temple (I Corinthians 3: 6ff) since these illustrate some characteristics of a life lived in the Spirit. The temple was dedicated for worship, so the Christian's life is devoted to God's service. The temple was for one purpose—for worship; the Christian has one aim—to glorify God. The temple, in contrast to the tabernacle, symbolized stability. In the life lived under the Spirit steadfastness, reliability and consistency are manifest. If we abide in the Spirit and He abides in us our character will reveal qualities such as these.

We have been surveying the course of the Spirit's work in any Christian life from its commencement to its maturity and we have found that the Spirit is active in every stage. All the varied processes which are caused by the Spirit are part

of salvation by which I mean fulness of life and health. The word sums up the whole process and the different aspects of each part of the process.

This salvation is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Salvation and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit are closely linked. Because He is holy He makes men holy and this is to save them to the uttermost. For St. Paul no man is fully a man until he is filled with the Spirit and knows that this is so. Our restoration is begun, continued and ended by the Spirit. He is equally the author and finisher of our faith. He both distributes and applies the salvation which God offers to man. It is because of the renewal imparted by the Spirit that we enter into a state of salvation and by Him we are kept through faith unto salvation. He does all in imparting salvation to us.

What we have been saying about the work of the Spirit in salvation can easily bear applying to a prominent and distressing feature of modern life. We hear a great deal about the need for integration of personality and about the resolution of inner conflict. Such disorder persists more or less in the believer. But the more the Holy Spirit operates the less widespread is the disorder. There is a direct ratio between the increase of the Spirit and the decrease of inner conflict. The integrated

character is that framed together and fitted together and filled by Him. He makes men to be of one mind but He also makes a man whole, no longer a replica of a civil war within, like H. G. Wells' Mr. Polly who was not a man but an internal civil war.

To take another illustration of man's lack of inner harmony, Dr. Jekyll in Stevenson's famous novel, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, hoped that the day might come when his diverse elements might be separated, the Christian, however, hopes for the day when he can will one will with the Spirit "to do and to endure" but also knows that he already is victorious even if the victory is not yet complete.

Therefore even if the life of the Christian reveals somewhat of the tension portrayed in Romans, Chapter 7, he is convinced of the possibility of victory. He sees temptations being overcome in his life; he finds himself becoming more unified in thought, will, purpose and achievement. An integrated person is being formed. After conversion through communion with the Holy Spirit, character is developed, a character which is unified and balanced.

We might say then that there is symbolism in speaking of "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5: 22), using the singular number. The virtues and graces

there mentioned flow from one source, namely, the life rooted and grounded in the Spirit and continually maintained by Him. *The fruit of the Spirit is like one tree with different branches.*

This chapter has described the gifts, privileges and powers which the Spirit can grant to individuals. One question should be asked and answered before we conclude.

How can we receive the Spirit? How can we become partakers of these benefits? In over ten cases the verb used to describe the attitude of the believer to them is 'receive'. In one case the Apostle Paul says that the power of the Spirit is received through faith (Galatians 3: 16). The use of this verb seems to imply human co-operation and the possibility of refusal. To as many as received Him Christ gave power to become the sons of God (St. John 1: 12). They, too, had to believe in Him and this they were free to do. The door can only be opened from the inside. We must open, enter, possess and be filled. This is an individual, personal act and decision.

Readings:—St. John 15: 1-6; Romans 12; I Corinthians 3: 16-17; 13: 1-13; Galatians 5: 22ff; Philippians 3: 10-16; II Peter 1: 5-8.

Hymns:—478, 480, 482, 483, 485, 487, 488, 489, 554, 783.

Prayers:

The Spirit of wisdom.

O God, who art both the light and the guide of them that put their trust in thee: Grant us in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what thou wouldest have us do, that the Spirit of wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in thy light we may see light; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Wm. Bright, 1824-1901 [adapted])

The Spirit of truth.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who hast promised in thy Holy Gospel that thy disciples shall know the truth, and the truth shall make them free: Give us, we pray thee, the Spirit of truth, sent by Thee and leading to Thee, that we may find the truth in finding Thee, who are the Way, the Truth, and the Life, for ever and ever.

The Spirit of purity.

O Eternal God, who hast taught us by thy holy word that our bodies are temples of thy Spirit: Keep us, we most humbly beseech thee, temperate and holy in thought, word and deed, that at the last we, with all the pure in heart, may see thee and be made like unto thee in thy heavenly kingdom; through Christ our Lord.

(Bishop Westcott)

The Spirit of power.

Almighty God, without whose aid we can do nothing: Endue us with thy Spirit of power from on high, that out of weakness we may be made strong; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Send, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, Thy Holy Spirit into our hearts, that He may rule and direct us according to Thy will, comfort us in all our temptations and afflictions, defend us from all error, and lead us into all truth; that we, being steadfast in the faith, may increase in love and in all good works, and in the end obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

8

THE MAIN RESULTS OF HIS WORK

THIS chapter will centre round three thoughts.

First we shall note how the Spirit treats the person in whose life He seeks to work. Next, stress will be laid upon our need of the Spirit's help. Lastly, some results of His work will be noted.

The Holy Spirit always works in a personal manner. He always treats us as persons. These two facts are essential if we are to get right ideas concerning His relationship to us. We should not think of Him as a funnel through which aid is poured for our benefit. His help is not like a medicine which we take, so many times daily or weekly; it is rather a companionship offered to us. While it is true that He is almighty yet His power is always exercised in love and men who are free beings can accept or refuse His offers. He will not force Himself upon us; our free consent is necessary. Human

co-operation is implied and human consent is sought.

The Holy Spirit does not act independently of us but at every stage of our spiritual development we must make our own effort using those means God has given. In the New Testament itself it has been pointed out that the Holy Ghost is to be met by personal effort and not passively received, for the Spirit is a constructive power co-operating with the spirit of man. The Spirit, to use an Old Testament metaphor, draws us with bands of love. He does not work in an arbitrary or mechanical way but in harmony with the mental and spiritual laws of our being. The Spirit takes account of these factors and so his relationship is not compulsive, working through force or impersonally, nor usually does He act in miraculous ways. Yet the Holy Spirit is always the predominant partner who worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure though we must work out our own salvation (Philippians 2: 12, 13). Even natural causes will contribute their small, almost infinitely small, share of co-operation with the Spirit. For example, by chance we may turn on a radio and hear great music, which will cleanse and purify us. Thus both human and divine freedom are safeguarded. This does not and need not deny the divine initia-

tive and the primary operation of the Holy Ghost upon the heart of man.

It should also be realized that *the Holy Spirit works upon the whole man*, the mind, the will, the heart, the intellect, the volitional and the emotional powers. It is the personality of man, whole and entire, from which the Spirit seeks response. Therefore the understanding is to be convinced so that it may comprehend and assent to that which has been already revealed. The Spirit of wisdom and revelation comes to our aid and informs our powers of judgment. Without Him we are like a blind man trying to see material objects. Spiritual discernment is His gift; for spiritual things can only be seen with the spiritual eye. Then the Holy Spirit having enlightened the understanding proceeds to renovate the will and the affections. This only reaches the ideal when there is an entire coincidence of the human with the divine will, when we can say "I delight to do thy will, O my God" (Psalms 40: 8).

The relationship between the Spirit and man must therefore be based on the freedom of each party and the bond of connection is faith which itself is part of the work of the Spirit and the witness and testimony to Him. Yet surrender to Him results in a sense of freedom never experienced

before. This experience is entirely personal and is based on personal trust. Belief in the Holy Spirit is required if we are to enjoy the excellency of His grace and the abundance of His gifts. We must believe that His work can be effectual, that He can strengthen our weakness. It cannot be treated in a legalistic manner, or regarded from the angle of ritual. Its root lies deeper in the realm of personality, of deep calling unto deep.

What has been said hints that the Spirit is the senior partner in our relationship with Him. But such a description is utterly inadequate. He is rather the air without which we cannot breathe, the water apart from which we cannot live. This is one of the hardest truths man has to face for he does not like to admit these facts but rather wants in everything to be the master of his fate, the captain of his own soul. Yet the self-made man is never man as God meant him to be. *Unless the Spirit is at work in our lives, we cannot be what we can be*, should be and are intended to be.

We have ample witness to remind us of our need of Him in relation to the varying demands of personal and social life. Serenity within and peace between nations, part of the fruit of the Spirit may be cited as obvious examples. But even plentiful evidence must not blind us to the fact that

people neglect to seek the Spirit's aid. Indeed even while men write or speak of our need of the Spirit's help, they themselves may, in one or more particulars, have been guilty of trying to live their own life independent of Him.

Parents and teachers may be means whereby the Holy Spirit acts, yet complete loyalty to them and dependence on them above all else may hinder the work of the Spirit. Observance of laws and Sundays can be instruments of grace yet we may be so anxious to keep the legal, ordinary obligation that we may be blind when some higher principle should take precedence. We may turn to the Bible and fail to lay it beside the newspaper and the Spirit may be speaking in both. The Bible in its realism deals with God's action in a particular historical context; the newspaper gives us another special event in which perhaps circumstances, even on the surface appearing similar, have yet new, changed or additional features and so a different decision is required. The adoption of a wise and good decision in the past may not be a wise or right decision to repeat.

A knowledge of how the Spirit may work is essential to any Christian life. The conversation of our Lord with Nicodemus teaches us very plainly that he who would enter the kingdom of

God can do so only if he is born again of the Spirit (St. John, Chapter 3). A number of phrases used in this connection stress our dependence upon Him. We are quickened, we awake from death, we are illuminated by Christ's light (Ephesians 2: 4ff). These are all deeds done from outside us which we cannot perform by ourselves.

Our continued spiritual life is due to His sustaining power. He is the vital principle of our religion. His inspiration is the fountain head and spring of every good act, every virtue we possess comes from Him.

Next to the Incarnation the *greatest thing God ever did was giving us the Spirit*. Without Him we should be dead, lifeless trunks. We cannot overrate His work. On the negative side, it has been asserted that every evil, under which the Church or individuals labour, may be traced to His absence.

The same idea is brought home from other angles. In the parable of the vine and the branches Christ strongly emphasised our dependence on Himself (St. John, Chapter 15); He later stated that He would go away and send the Spirit to take His place. Our dependence therefore upon the Spirit must be equal to that of the disciples upon Christ. The Spirit is the great agent of Christ.

Again He alone can convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment; Roman Law and justice, Jewish religion have failed. We see that they helped to cause the death of our Lord. Something not only outwardly powerful but inwardly so is a necessity for man's salvation. The heart must be stirred. Conformity in many, or even in all, outward acts is not sufficient; motives must be purified. This is not only a work the Spirit alone can accomplish but, as far as human knowledge goes, it is a work worthy of Him. Consequently, we have both a need and a duty to be led by Him.

This fact is true when we examine our life from the standpoint of right use of the seven fold gifts, wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord, (Isaiah 11:2), and true godliness which the Spirit alone can infuse. He perfects His own gifts in strength and intensity. His gifts are prior to our good works. From His gifts proceed virtues, and thereby fruit is produced. The virtues are faith, goodness, knowledge, self control, patience, godliness, brotherly affection, love (II Peter 1: 7). The fruit is given in Galatians 5: 22, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, good will, fidelity, gentleness, self control.

This dependence is not a momentary act, nor is

His presence necessary not only to commence spiritual life. *His help is essential all during our life.* His aid must be continued; occasional assistance is not enough. The Christian is aware of the fact that consciousness of the Spirit's help in great crises or emergencies is realized often afterwards, and is sometimes not obvious, but if we rely on Him then in faith we can expect His aid in the great issues of life.

The Spirit makes real the presence of Christ, in whom the glory of God is manifest. Through the Spirit's operation men are enabled to recognize who Jesus Christ is. Thus because of the links between the Holy Spirit and Christ, the former's work is the extension of the Incarnation. Through Him, Christ — whom we no longer know after the flesh — is known. We have fellowship with Him. Once more this implies fellowship with God, and knowledge and awareness of God; clear distinctions on the points mentioned in this paragraph are seldom made in the New Testament.

Through the working of the Spirit Christians realize that God is active, that God has been manifest in Christ, that Christ still acts through His Vicar the Spirit. While the Spirit is at work in the world the pattern of His work is that of the revelation already given in Christ. This point is

easy to overlook and equally it is very important that we should bear it in mind.

Next we want to recall something of what the Spirit's work means for the Church and also for the individual Christian. Because the Spirit represents Christ and supplies His bodily absence, the whole being of the Church depends on Him. Hence close bonds between the believers as the members of the Body, and the Head are formed by the work of the Spirit. We may say that the link between Christ, the Spirit and the Church is well expressed in the sentence, "The presence of the Spirit in the Church is the presence of the Lord." Here is a gift to strengthen and empower the Church for her tasks. Perhaps this will be most vividly apparent in the evangelization of the world, for the Church was created by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of making Christ known over all the world. The Spirit's work has always had a missionary significance. In the early activities of the growing Church we find constant reference to plans for expansion being forbidden or furthered by the Holy Spirit; also in all activities there was the sense that the Holy Spirit was working with them (Acts 16: 7ff). The gifts of tongues, prophecy and boldness were all useful for this purpose. The Holy Spirit also came to repair the

loss which man since Adam had suffered and His redemption was to be universal in its scope. At best, without the Spirit, the Church has only an attractive outside. *Apart from the Spirit, the Church is like a wax figure in a shop window, beautiful perhaps but lifeless.*

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Glory and of God and individual Christians reproduce something of that glory, having received the right to become sons of God. The points are well brought out in chapter three of the second epistle to the Corinthians. Believers are impressed with the character of God by the Spirit and this glory is permanent. We see in Christ the glory of God, we gaze upon it, we reflect glimpses of it. We are being changed and transformed into His glory.

“The Spirit of God is the divine artist. In the face of Jesus Christ and in the face of His followers, He paints a living picture of the eternal glory of God.”

The results of His work are glory, life and power. This fact is seen even in the Old Testament in different and diverse manifestations. At times the power experienced is that which enables us to act; at other times it is one of illuminating our understanding to find truth, to discover what is the true way of approach to a problem or a person (a

bigger difficulty), a gift of wisdom to discern, or revelation of what has been mysterious or baffling.

The aspect of life and power is obvious when we consider sudden conversion or when believers bear witness to the fact that they now love what once they hated, and hate what once they loved. Here we have the twofold aspect of the word "power" outlined as concerned with the spiritual life. On the one hand the Spirit enables us to break "the power of cancelled sin"; on the other He fits the believer to be a witness to truth. Both the negative and positive meanings should be borne in mind.

Energy is of the very essence of the Spirit's nature. Without it He would not be what He is, and so if we wish to grasp the content of the word "Spirit" as portrayed in the apostolic writers we must investigate the instances of the use of the words "power" and "life" in the New Testament, their meanings and manifestations. Life was imparted; life which was of a new quality, quickening personality, uniting men to each other and to God for eternal life, itself a gift conveyed through the Holy Spirit. He is the Spirit of power and of life. Christ came that we might have life and that we might have it more abundantly (St. John 10: 10). The Spirit offers such life today.

At present many find their existence full of insecurity, without meaning or purpose and frustrating at every turn. Many would unite to say that life is a "burden which no thinking person would wantonly inflict" on someone else; that it is like a candle, liable to be put out at any time, that it is like a player strutting on a stage for a short time or an "eddy of purposeless dust, effort unmeaning and vain".

People want life, a fuller life than they have, a life with a sense of reality, of purpose, of meaning in it. It is this life which the Holy Spirit offers, confers and gives to us so that by belief in Him and receiving His power we can say that man's life is good, that it is fit to employ the heart and the soul and the senses, if not in continual joy, as Browning wrote, certainly in living so that we can face reality and feel that our efforts are worth while.

Such is the quality of life a Christian should live and this is what he should proclaim inviting others to share it and commending it by his example. The Spirit will act in him and then through him to confer this gift of life and power upon others seeking it and willing to receive it.

One other aspect of the Spirit's operation, mentioned by Dr. Dillistone in his book on the Holy

Spirit to which I am indebted in this chapter, welds together these three aspects of the Spirit's work. It is the concept of order. If we take order as meaning just and harmonious relationships in society it implies a fourfold relationship for man, — to God, to the world, to his fellows and to himself. What life have you, asks Mr. T. S. Eliot, if you have not life to-gether? Indeed it is hard to know how to arrange these four points for many talk glibly about the world and our neighbours without realizing that a man is often an internal civil war and that the only cure for this is a right adjustment to God, to himself, to others and to life around him for

“There is no life that is not community,
And no community not lived in praise of
God.”

But really the change in all four relationships to be of value should be simultaneous, even if incomplete, leaving great room for further progress in all or in some more than others. Here is where the operation of the Spirit coming from without a man is especially relevant. *The Spirit creates order and harmony both individual and social.*

In a truly Christian social order of living, all would be animated by one Spirit, all would realize membership of one body, all would be actuated

by love. Life would possess that rhythm which reduces tedium and provides harmony between freedom and authority, privilege and responsibility. *The Spirit is the creator of an ordered personal and social life.*

These results of the Spirit's work in the world, the Church and the Christian, answer and supply the needs of man. We talk to-day of a planned society; the Spirit creates harmony enabling difficulties to be adjusted, met and overcome. Men are oppressed by the sense of powerlessness in face of terrifying potential catastrophes. We have not the power to avert these or the power to control the possibilities for destruction which lie in our own inventions. The Spirit can give power. Men have possibilities for using the resources of the world in physical, intellectual, social and cultural spheres in a way not possible before and yet perhaps there is a greater lack of contentment and happiness, of inner serenity, of security, of comradeship than ever before. The benefits of the Spirit can supply what is lacking.

May it not therefore be true to say that *to rediscover and appropriate the gifts of the Spirit is imperative*. To live in contact with Him and to use them is our most urgent need to-day. It is our most compelling duty and our greatest privi-

lege. This blessing has been entrusted to Christians for their own use and as a blessing about which all are to be told and in which all are invited to share. In our twentieth century as in the second it may be said of us that we can hold the world together (Epistle to Diognetus, Chapter six). The Holy Spirit gives "light to them that sit in darkness" and guides "our feet into the way of peace" (St. Luke 1: 79).

Readings:—St. Matthew 28: 19; II Corinthians 13: 14; Joel 2: 28ff.

Hymns:—171, 182, 472.

Prayers:

O Holy Ghost, giver of light and life, impart to us thoughts higher than our own thoughts, and prayers better than our own prayers, and powers beyond our own powers, that we may spend and be spent in the ways of love and goodness, after the perfect image of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
(From "Daily Prayer")

Praise be to thee, O Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of life, the Strengtheners and Sustainer of men;

Praise be to thee, who declarest unto us the things of Christ, and dost guide us into all the truth;

Praise be to thee, who art ever waiting to be-

stow upon us thy manifold gifts and to abide in us for ever.

Come, gracious Spirit, and dwell in us, we humbly beseech thee, and so transform the souls of men, with cleansing and reviving power, that all may see the mighty works of God in this our day.

Hear us, O Holy Spirit, who with the Father and the Son livest and reignest in the glory of the Godhead, for ever and for ever.

O Holy Spirit, who proceedest from the Father and the Son, enrich us with the gift of Thy blessing; that stablished by Thy free Spirit we may be counted worthy to be set free daily by Thy descent from Heaven. Let Thy blessings, therefore be upon us, and do Thou ever strengthen us through the untold power of the Trinity, that the Holy Spirit may dwell in us, the right Spirit renew us, the free Spirit stablish us in single witness of their might; and so we may rejoice to be stablished by the Father, renewed by the Son, and guarded by the Holy Spirit. (Mozarabic.)

A Short List of Smaller Books for Further Reading

F. W. Dillistone — The Holy Spirit in the Life of To-day

J. E. Fison — The Blessing of the Spirit

C. E. Lambert — Life in the Spirit

P. Loyd — The Acts of the Apostles

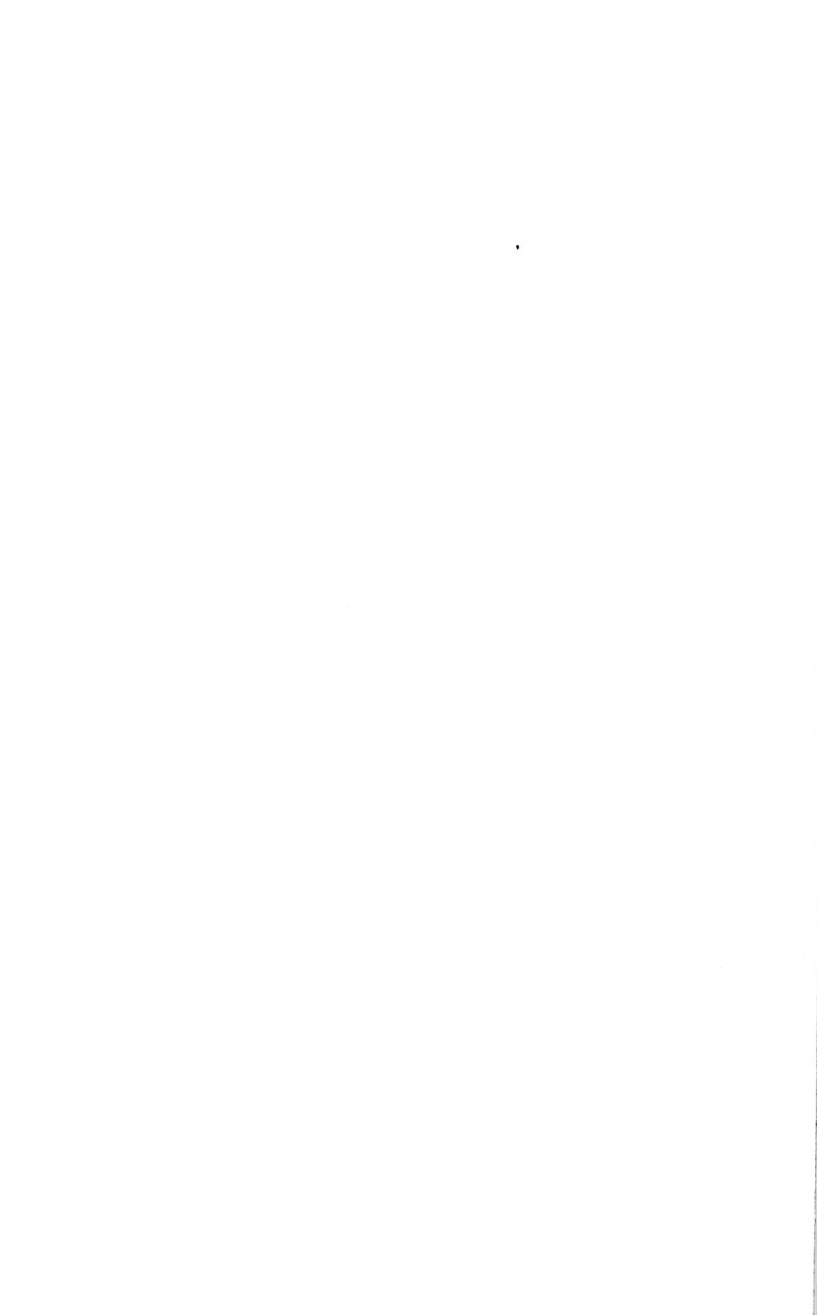
G. F. Nuttall — The Holy Spirit and Ourselves

Some Larger Works

C. Gore — The Holy Spirit and the Church

H. W. Robinson — The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit

H. B. Swete — The Holy Spirit in the New Testament



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